



SCHOLARS
STRATEGY NETWORK

Chicago is Right to Study Whether Gay-Owned Businesses Should Get Contract Set-Asides

Mahesh Somashekhar, University of Illinois at Chicago

There has been spirited debate since Mayor Lori Lightfoot **called for a study** to examine whether Chicago should establish a contract set-aside program for gay and transgender business owners.

Several aldermen have criticized the plan, claiming that business owners could simply pretend to be gay or transgender in order to receive a city contract. These aldermen also believe a set-aside program could disproportionately benefit white men who are gay but don't need preferential treatment.