



November 1, 2013

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of African American Ministers in Action, a project of People For the American Way, we write in strong support of the important, bipartisan civil rights legislation known as the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) (H.R. 1755 & S. 815).

In most states, employers can fire or refuse to hire someone based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. 29 states lack employment non-discrimination laws that protect lesbian, gay, and bisexual Americans. 33 states' laws lack gender identity protections.¹ These road blocks stand in the way of those who may be unable to financially support themselves and their families. It is time for the laws of the country to reflect public support² for the principle of employment fairness.

Discrimination is wrong no matter how it manifests itself, however it disguises itself. If we're going to build the beloved community that Dr. King spoke of, we must be conscious of discrimination, no matter where it rears its ugly head. As African American ministers, we know what it takes to stand up against systemic oppression. It is in solidarity and love that we recognize the plight of others and support this struggle for the same protections. Passage of ENDA would be a major step in the right direction by ensuring that current federal protections are extended to sexual orientation and gender identity.

ENDA is commonsense legislation that addresses injustice with a sensible solution. We strongly support ENDA.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Timothy McDonald, III".

Reverend Timothy McDonald, III
Co-Chair
African American Ministers in Action

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Reverend Robert P. Shine".

Reverend Dr. Robert P. Shine
Co-Chair
African American Ministers in Action

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Leslie Watson Malachi".

Minister Leslie Watson Malachi
Director, African American Religious Affairs
People For the American Way

¹ <http://www.workplaceopportunity.org/the-facts>

² Poll release, <http://www.workplaceopportunity.org/press/republican-pollster-supermajority-of-voters-support-employment-non-discrimi>. Poll memo, <http://www.workplaceopportunity.org/ENDApoll>.