



November 4, 2013

United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

We, a growing coalition of young elected officials from 18 states and the District of Columbia, call on you to put your full support behind 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 civil rights gaps leave far too many people, including some of our own constituents, vulnerable to workplace discrimination, and the terrifying threat of being unable to financially support themselves and their families.

American principles of fairness and equal opportunity should be extended to all in the workplace. Passage of ENDA would be a major step in the right direction by ensuring that current federal protections against employment discrimination on the basis of race, religion, gender, national origin, age, and disability are extended to include sexual orientation and gender identity.

Public support for ENDA has remained strong over the years. A September 2013 poll conducted by Target Point Consulting's Alex Lundry for Americans for Workplace Opportunity found that 68 percent of voters, including 56 percent of Republicans, believe that the rights of gay men and lesbians and transgender employees should be protected by federal law.² Additionally, nearly 90 percent of Fortune 500 companies have included sexual orientation in their workplace policies, and 57 percent also provide protections based on gender identity.³ Corporate America is leading the way toward workplace fairness, and Congress needs to act to level the playing field for all.

ENDA is commonsense legislation that says no to anti-gay extremists,⁴ addressing injustice with a sensible solution. As we have noted, it would extend protections that some of our own states and many large corporations already provide – without disruptive business consequences.

We strongly support ENDA and urge you, a fellow elected official, to do the same.

Sincerely,

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>.

³ <http://www.workplaceopportunity.org/broad-support>

⁴ <http://www.pfaw.org/press-releases/2013/10/enda-near-top-ten-religious-right-claims-about-employment-non-discrimination->

YEO Action

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Scott Kawasaki
State Representative
Fairbanks, AK

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Daniel Hernandez
Sunnyside Unified School District Board Member
Tucson, AZ

CALIFORNIA

Adam Carranza
Mountain View Board of Education Member
El Monte, CA

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Cupertino, CA

Wesley Farrow
Neighborhood Council Treasurer
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Frank Guzman
Pomona Unified School District Vice President
Pomona, CA

Rebecca Saltzman
Bay Area Rapid Transit Board Member
Oakland, CA

Kaitlin Sopoci-Belknap
Humboldt Bay Municipal Water District Board of Directors
Eureka, CA

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House Speaker
Denver, CO

Faith Winter
Mayor Pro-Tem
Westminster, CO

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Town Council Member
Monroe, CT

Roland Lemar
State Representative
New Haven, CT

FLORIDA

Enbar Cohen
City Commissioner
Aventura, FL

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Jamar Brown
School Board Vice President
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Megan England
Roeland Park City Council Member
Roeland Park, KS

Mike Gaughan
Douglas County Commissioner
Lawrence, KS

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State Representative
Portland, ME

Diane Russell
State Representative
Portland, ME

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Heather Mizeur
State Delegate
Takoma Park, MD

Patrick Wojahn
City Council Member
College Park, MD

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Amelia Peloquin
Councilor-at-Large
Southbridge, MA

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Bryce Bennett
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Jeremy Nordquist
State Senator
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Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner
Washington, DC