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Cosponsor the Employment Non-Discrimination Act

Dear Colleague:

We invite you to join us in reintroducing the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). This legislation extends federal employment discrimination protections that are currently provided based on race, religion, gender, national origin, age and disability, to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Every year, qualified hard-working Americans are denied job opportunities because of who they are. Countless others live in fear of losing their jobs. In 33 states, it is legal to fire someone otherwise qualified, simply because of his or her sexual orientation; the same is true in 42 states based on gender identity.

ENDA is a common-sense remedy for this unfair situation. This legislation creates no "special rights." It reflects a bedrock American principle that working men and women should be judged solely on the basis of their job performances, not prejudice. Specifically, ENDA:

- Prohibits employers from making decisions about hiring, firing, promoting or compensating an employee based on sexual orientation or gender identity.
- Makes clear that preferential treatment and quotas are strictly prohibited, and that lawsuits cannot be based on statistics about the sexual orientation or gender identity of employees.
- Exempts Members of the Armed Forces, veterans' preferences and religious organizations.
- Does not require employers to provide benefits to domestic partners.

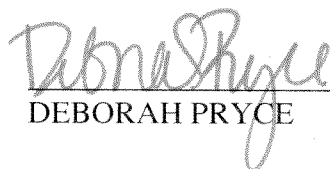
This legislation enjoys bipartisan support in both the House and Senate and came within one vote of passage in the Senate in 1996. In 2002, ENDA was reported to the full Senate by a bipartisan vote in the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions but unfortunately was not scheduled for floor time prior to the adjournment of the 107th Congress.

ENDA reflects non-discrimination policies already in place at major corporations like AT&T, Raytheon and Xerox; 86% of the Fortune 500 extend protections based on sexual orientation. Seventeen states have laws protecting gay, lesbian, and bisexual people from employment discrimination and eight have laws that also protect transgender workers.

If you are interested in cosponsoring ENDA or have any questions regarding this legislation, please contact Joe Racalto (Frank) at 5-5931 or Parker Sinclair (Pryce) at 5-2015.



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