



The 2007 House of Representatives ENDA vote:

Another step on the long march for equality

WASHINGTON, DC, November 8, 2007 — Yesterday, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) by a vote of 235-184. Thirty-five Republicans joined 200 Democrats in passing the bill. The legislation would prohibit employment discrimination based on sexual orientation. Unfortunately, the bill as passed does not include gender identity protections.

This historic vote should be applauded as another step towards supporting equal rights for all Americans. The recent controversies and discussion about the inclusion of protections for individuals based on gender identity and the expression have heightened the awareness of topics and understandings that are new and unfamiliar in many dialogues within our communities and with our politicians. Hate and discrimination are very real threats. We now have opportunities and an obligation to let America know what hurt and harm is done, and what we can ask our legislators and President to do to make our nation stronger.

While we like untold generations before us have and live lives that that are not all the same, it is only recently that public discourse and policy has been challenged to break the chains of oppression and obscurity that have limited our freedoms because of our sexual orientation, gender identity, expression, and lives that are not limited by stereotypical categories. The most effective tools we have are to share insights into our lives and challenges with the family and friends we have. As we can we also need to expand our outreach story-by-story, tear-by-tear, and heart-by-heart. We have messages that many of our fellow Americans will support as the right thing to do.

When the stories Americans hear are about members of their family, church, or workplace who struggle to survive from being stereotyped and stigmatized we have a chance to connect with them. As everyday Americans see no reasonable alternative but an end to discrimination, a comprehensive approach and an ENDA will have much broader public support and both the House and Senate will advance legislation that and will be supported and signed by the President.

Federal GLOBE: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Employees of the Federal Government—a nonprofit group of federal employees is dedicated to working within the federal government to eliminate barriers to ALL lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality in the workplace.

Leonard Hirsch Federal GLOBE President said, “We thank Speaker Pelosi and the House leadership, Congresspersons Frank and Baldwin, and the bipartisan majority for moving ENDA forward. Education done in the halls of Congress and in the districts of this nation to pass any bill is a major part of progress. Federal GLOBE applauds the hundreds of LGBT, labor, education, business and civil rights organizations which have worked hard to do this education and marshal support for ENDA. Clearly we all have more to do in the coming years to move from this important symbolic vote to a fully inclusive ENDA that is the law of the land.”

As Federal employees, we are proud to serve our Nation. In turn, we hope our Nation will resolve inequities we face as our partners and families suffer disparities and exclusion from participation under benefits programs for non-merit based reasons. Federal GLOBE supports and encourages support for legislation such as a Domestic partnership Benefits

and Obligation Act. Broader civil rights will enhance and strengthen our nation. ENDA alone will not resolve all disparities and ills, but it is a start and is a worthy endeavor.

For more information on Federal GLOBE, please visit www.fedglobe.org or contact Leonard Hirsch: 1.202.236.0305.