

THE EQUALITY ACT



Bill Number

Reintroduced in the House as H.R.2282 by Rep. David N. Cicilline (RI-1) and in the Senate as S.1006 by Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR).

Purpose of Bill

The Equality Act will amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other federal laws such that LGBTQ people are treated as a protected class under federal law. It will also strengthen and expand protections for those already designated as belonging to a protected class.

Action Request

Ask your Members of Congress to support this bill. If they are not a co-sponsor of the bill, ask them to support it by co-sponsoring. If they are already a cosponsor, be sure to thank them.

Talking Points

- **The Equality Act will strengthen anti-discrimination protections not just for the LGBTQ community, but for everyone, including women and communities of color.** The bill will add protections from discrimination on the basis of sex, sexual orientation and gender identity to the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and expand the definition of public accommodations. It will bar religious freedom from being used as a defense for discrimination against any protected class.
- **LGBTQ people deserve to be treated like every other protected class.** People who are LGBTQ currently lack equal protections regarding employment, public services and spaces, public education, fair housing, credit, and access to jury service. This bill will extend the same rights to LGBTQ Americans that are currently afforded to other protected groups.
- **The Equality Act will provide full protection from discrimination for all LGBTQ individuals in the U.S.** Passing the Equality Act will end inconsistencies that vary by geography and ensure that, no matter where an LGBTQ person lives or visits, they enjoy the same protections as all other people.