

EQUALITY ACT [H.R. 1 / S. TBD]



The Equality Act would provide consistent and explicit non-discrimination protections for LGBTQ people across key areas of life, including employment, housing, credit, education, public spaces and services, federally funded programs, and jury service. By amending the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other federal laws, LGBTQ people would be treated as a protected class under federal law. The Equality Act will also strengthen and expand protections for those already designated as belonging to a protected class.

This bill was introduced in the House on February 18, 2021 by Rep. David Cicilline (D-RI 1) and introduced in the Senate on February 23, 2021 by Sens. Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Cory Booker (D-NJ).

Action Request

Ask your House Member to:

- Co-sponsor the Equality Act if they are not already doing so.
 - Thank them for their co-sponsorship.
- Vote yes to pass the Equality Act when it comes to the House floor for a vote.

Ask your Senators to:

- Support the Equality Act, especially if they serve on the Senate Judiciary Committee.
- Co-sponsor, if they are not doing so already.
 - Thank them for their co-sponsorship, if they are already a co-sponsor.
- Read/listen to your own or your family member's experience with discrimination to highlight why the Equality Act is needed.

Share your story:

- Post on social media
- Write a letter to the editor
- Meet with your Senator
- Join a phone bank.

Talking Points

- **We need our elected leaders in Washington to pass the Equality Act** to extend the same rights to LGBTQ+ Americans that are currently afforded to other protected groups.
- **Federal law does not fully protect our LGBTQ+ loved ones, especially transgender people of color, and Black trans people in particular.** Without federal protection from discrimination through the Equality Act, banks and landlords do not have to extend payment leniency for credit or housing as they would for other protected groups, and LGBTQ+ people will still be excluded from access to public services, public education, public spaces, and jury duty.
- **We need the Equality Act because protection from discrimination should not depend on your zip code or the hope that someone else is a person of good will.** 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.
- **The Equality Act will strengthen anti-discrimination protections for everyone, including LGBTQ+ people, women, disabled people, people of color, and other protected classes.** 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 also bars discrimination cloaked as religious freedom from being used against any protected class.
- LGBTQ+ people have won critical victories in the fight against discrimination in this last year, both at the Supreme Court with the decision banning LGBTQ+ discrimination in employment in *Bostock v Clayton County* and with President Biden's recent pro-LGBTQ+ executive orders. **The Equality Act is still needed in spite of these victories.** Neither the *Bostock* decision nor President Biden's executive orders achieve the full protections in employment, housing, and public accommodations that the Equality Act guarantees. Secondly, the *Bostock* decision and the recent executive orders are both easily reversible. **The LGBTQ+ community needs the permanent, guaranteed protections the Equality Act will afford them.**