

## **150 Organizations to Announce Launch of United ENDA, a Nationwide Campaign to Ensure Transgender Protections Remain in Employment Non-Discrimination Act**

October 5, 2007

The National Center for Lesbian Rights, Equality California, and the Transgender Law Center joined the **National Gay and Lesbian Task Force**, the Equality Federation, the National Center for Transgender Equality, PFLAG, the Stonewall Democrats, and more than 150 other organizations in announcing the launch of a united campaign to win passage of a fully inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), H.R. 2015. Called United ENDA, the campaign continues the unprecedented display of unity in our community over the past week, as organizations and individuals from across the country have joined together to oppose any efforts to weaken ENDA by removing protections for gender identity and expression, which would be particularly devastating for transgender people.

The organizations comprising United ENDA will meet daily to keep the pressure on Congress to restore the ENDA originally introduced earlier this year, which protects everyone in our community. The groups have signed on to a joint letter to Congress objecting to a diminished bill that abandons transgender people and weakens protections for all lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people. As a result of the joint letter to Congress, phone calls and e-mails from constituents and direct lobbying by LGBT organizations, a scheduled House committee hearing on a sexual-orientation-only ENDA was postponed until Tuesday, providing United ENDA with a short window to continue its advocacy on H.R. 2015.

The campaign will allow organizations to better coordinate lobbying strategies, grassroots mobilization efforts, online activism, as well as media and legal strategies.

**"I greatly appreciate the Task Force's uncompromising leadership in the current struggle to maintain ENDA as a strong and effective bill that protects everyone in the LGBT community," said Shannon Price Minter, Legal Director of the National Center for Lesbian Rights. "By uniting over a hundred groups around the country to take action on a fully inclusive ENDA, the Task Force has helped to empower us all to do our best work."**

**"Equality California is pleased to join the Task Force and other allied organizations in making sure no part of our community is left out of this legislation,"** said EQCA Executive Director Geoff Kors. "We faced a similar fight in 2002 with California's foster care nondiscrimination bill, and did not give up until we had an inclusive proposal. As a community, we will stand and fight again until we have strong policies that support the fair and equal treatment of all people."

"The transgender community is heartened and inspired by the overwhelming support of our lesbian, gay, bisexual and heterosexual allies," said Masen Davis, Executive Director of the Transgender Law Center. "We are profoundly grateful for the leadership of the Task Force, National Center for Lesbian Rights and Equality California. The United ENDA campaign

symbolizes inseparable, unequivocal, and nonnegotiable solidarity within today's LGBT movement."