

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 7, 2015

U.S. Commission on Civil Rights
1331 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 1150
Washington, DC 20425

Dear Chairman and Members of the Commission:

We write to express our appreciation for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights recently holding its first briefing dedicated entirely to workplace discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Americans. Discrimination on the job runs counter to the core American values of fairness and equality. However, hardworking Americans can be fired or denied job opportunities simply because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

As Members of Congress dedicated to promoting equal rights to every American, we believe that no one should lose their job simply because of who they are or who they love. All workers should have the opportunity to earn a living and provide for their families. Although a strong majority of voters support federal policies that would prohibit this harmful discrimination, there are limited avenues for recourse, and currently there are no federal prohibitions on this shameful practice.

This discrimination not only harms individuals and their families, but it also stifles growth, creativity, and innovation in the broader market. Recognizing this, many of America's top companies have taken steps to protect their own employees, and most Fortune 500 companies now have policies in place prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Although these employer-based policies are important, they are not enough. Federal, nationwide protections are critical to end discrimination and to ensure that every worker has an equal opportunity to earn a living.

Once again, we are glad that the Commission held this important briefing and hope that it can serve as a meaningful step towards ending discrimination against LGBT people and ensuring that everyone enters the workplace on a level playing field.

Sincerely,



Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress



Frank LoBiondo
Member of Congress

Charles W Dent

Charles W. Dent
Member of Congress

Mike Coffman

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R Hanna

Richard Hanna
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