



**EQUALITY OHIO**

## Talking Points - EHEA

**On Tuesday, March 11**, 8 Ohio Senators and 16 Representatives will take a stand to do what's right for Ohio. We all should firmly support and applaud the leadership of Representatives Stewart, Peterson, Redfern, Ujvagi, Skindell, Foley, Celeste, Koziura, Budish, Yates, Chandler, Brown, Hagan, Brady, Sykes, and House Minority Leader Beatty as well as Senators (Dale) Miller, Morano, Smith, Cafaro, Kearney, Roberts, Sawyer and Senate Minority Leader (Ray) Miller.

Together, they are advocating for legislation to ensure that everyone in Ohio has equal access to jobs and housing.

### **It's time Ohio's laws match Ohioan's values.**

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- **We live in a country that promises everyone equal treatment, with a constitution that speaks to certain inalienable rights.** And, yet, in Ohio, people can lose their jobs or be denied housing, solely because of their sexual orientation or gender identity-- they can even be removed from a restaurant or movie.
- Ohioans should not fear losing their livelihood because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. **Discrimination is an all-too-unpleasant reality for too many LGBT people in our state.**
- State law already specifically prohibits discrimination based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, ancestry, disability. (Section 4112.02 Ohio Revised Code).
- **Two thirds of Ohioans favor employment and housing laws** that make it illegal to discriminate based on sexual orientation or gender identity:

"Currently in Ohio, an individual can be fired from their job or refused housing because they are gay. Would you support or oppose a law making it illegal to fire or deny housing in Ohio to any person because he or she is gay or lesbian?"

**66% strongly or somewhat support**

Equality Ohio Education Fund Statewide Survey, November 13-16, 2006 of 800 registered Ohio voters, margin of error +/-3.5%, conducted by Glengariff Group, Inc.

- **Fairness is not a partisan issue.** That's why Ohio's own Republican Congressmen Dave Hobson and Pat Tiberi, and Congresswoman Deborah Pryce, all voted in favor of the federal Employment Nondiscrimination Act. They knew it was the right thing to do for the nation. **This is the right thing to do for Ohio.**

- Twenty-one states<sup>1</sup>, 433 of the top Fortune 500<sup>2</sup>, 11 of Ohio's 13 four-year public universities<sup>3</sup>, **and the Ohio House of Representatives** already ban discrimination based on sexual orientation.
  - 16 Ohio cities<sup>4</sup> ban discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity. **This protects less than 20% of Ohio's population.**
  - **Unfair practices are bad for business and bad for Ohio's economy.** Top Ohio employers like Nationwide Insurance say that Ohio's intolerance harms their ability to attract and keep a skilled, creative workforce.
  - Governor Strickland supports this legislation and looks forward to signing it into law when it reaches his desk.
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**Ohio lawmakers should put an end to unfairness. Why should we tolerate discrimination for any reason? It's time to do what's right.**

1 HRC.org

2 [http://w3.hrc.org/Template.cfm?Section=Search\\_the\\_Database&Template=/CustomSource/WorkNet/srch.cfm&searchtypeid=4&searchSubTypeID=1](http://w3.hrc.org/Template.cfm?Section=Search_the_Database&Template=/CustomSource/WorkNet/srch.cfm&searchtypeid=4&searchSubTypeID=1)

3 Ibid

4 Equality Ohio Education Fund Local Jurisdiction Ratings, 3.6.08