

April 21, 2015

**Joint Statement Opposing Efforts to Use Religion to Discriminate in Congress  
from Organizations Advocating for LGBT Rights, Reproductive Freedom, and Freedom of  
Religion and Belief**

As leaders in movements for LGBT equality, reproductive freedom, and freedom of religion and belief, we stand shoulder-to-shoulder in opposition to efforts – at the state and federal level – to use religion to discriminate. We know all too well how people can be harmed when discrimination is allowed under the guise of religious liberty. Religious freedom is an important American value that guarantees all of us the freedom to hold any belief we choose, but it does not allow us to discriminate against and harm others. That is true with respect to businesses citing religious beliefs to refuse to serve people based on who they are or who they love. It is equally true when religion is invoked to deny women essential reproductive health care, or to discriminate against them for their private, personal health care decisions.

We stand in united opposition to an effort in Congress (H.J. Res. 43) that would block a District of Columbia bill – the Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Amendment Act – that is designed to ensure that D.C. residents are not subject to employment discrimination because of their reproductive health care decisions. Women and men in D.C. should have the ability to make their own decisions about their reproductive health without fear of losing their jobs or facing retribution from their employers. This afternoon, the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee adopted this measure to block the Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Amendment Act.

We are also strongly opposed to a measure (H.J. Res. 44) that would block another D.C. nondiscrimination bill – the Human Rights Amendment Act – that is designed to ensure that LGBT students in the District are not subject to discrimination by schools and universities. Members of Congress should stand on the side of dignity and human rights by rejecting these efforts.

We stand together – and we will vigorously oppose every effort to allow religious claims to be used to discriminate and harm others.

American Civil Liberties Union  
Americans United for Separation of Church and State  
Anti-Defamation League  
Believe Out Loud  
Bisexual Resource Center  
Center for Black Equity, Inc.  
Center for Reproductive Rights  
CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers  
COLAGE  
Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals  
Equality Federation  
Freedom to Marry

GLAAD

Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders

Gay-Straight Alliance Network

Human Rights Campaign

Lambda Legal

NARAL Pro-Choice America

National Abortion Federation

National Black Justice Coalition

National Center for Lesbian Rights

National Center for Transgender Equality

National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP)

National Council of Jewish Women

National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC)

National LGBTQ Task Force

National Organization for Women (NOW)

National Partnership for Women & Families

National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance (NQAPIA)

National Women's Law Center

Out & Equal Workplace Advocates

People For the American Way

PFLAG National

Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Reproductive Health Technologies Project

SAGE (Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders)

Trans People of Color Coalition (TPOCC)

Transgender Law Center