



2007-2008

Officers:

Christina E. Miller
Co-Chair

Charles P. (Chic) Wagner
Co-Chair

Emilie Kramer
Treasurer

John B. Koss
Secretary

Board of Directors:

Patience Crozier
Emilie Curtis
David Eppley
Laura K. Langley
Timothy Lynch
Christopher Norris
Jane Rothchild
Matthew Sample
Adrienne Walker
Lisa Wilson
Tony Wright

Ex-Officio:

John N. Affuso
Vickie Henry
Joyce Kauffman
Robert L. Quinan, Jr.

October 9, 2007

Dear Congressional Delegates of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts:

The Massachusetts Lesbian and Gay Bar Association (MLGBA) wishes to voice its full support for the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA; H.R. 2015) in a form that *includes* protection on the basis of gender identity, as well as sexual orientation. We believe that it is neither just nor pragmatic to seek to pass ENDA without such protections. In taking this position, the MLGBA joins with leading civil rights organizations such as the American Civil Liberties Union, Lambda Legal, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders and the Transgender Law Center.

The MLGBA supports attorneys, legal professionals and law students of all sexual orientations and gender identities, including transgender individuals, across the Commonwealth. Our members work in federal and state government, in the nation's leading firms and companies, for legal services organizations, and as members of the judiciary. We are keenly aware that federal protections are needed to secure the equal treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people in the workplace.

We believe that an ENDA stripped of gender identity protection breaks from the goal of workplace equality for all people, without regard to sexual orientation or gender identity. Transgender people across the nation experience high levels of unemployment and poverty because of employment discrimination based solely on irrational prejudices against their gender identity.

We further believe that an ENDA without gender identity protection simply leaves the door open for continued discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual people. Put bluntly, under a weakened ENDA, even brazen discrimination against a person's sexual orientation will go unchecked if it is voiced as the belief that a male employee is "not manly enough" or "a sissy", or that a female employee is "not feminine enough" or "too macho".

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is a leader in affirming the legal equality of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people. The recent introduction of Massachusetts House Bill 1722, *An Act Relative to Gender-Based Discrimination and Hate Crimes*, which would include protection for gender identity and expression in the Commonwealth's non-discrimination laws, continues that leadership at a state

level. We ask that our Congressional delegation also affirm the Commonwealth role as a leader in civil rights by supporting an ENDA that includes gender identity protections.

The MLGBA thanks its Congressional delegation.

Sincerely,

Christina Miller

Charles P. (Chic) Wagner

cc: Speaker Nancy Pelosi
Committee Chairman George Miller