



Talking Points – Equal Housing and Employment Act 2009/2010

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

- **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)
- **Nearly three quarters 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?”

71.5% strongly or somewhat support

Equality Ohio Education Fund Statewide Survey, February 10, 2009 of 600 registered Ohio voters, margin of error +/-4%, 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 in 2007. They knew it was the right thing to do for the nation. **This is the right thing to do for Ohio.**

- Twenty-one states¹, 433 of the top Fortune 500², 11 of Ohio's 13 four-year public universities³, **and the Ohio House of Representatives** already ban discrimination based on sexual orientation.
- 16 Ohio cities⁴ 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.
- Ohio currently has no law at the state level protecting or recognizing LGBT people or their families. **This ties Ohio for nearly dead-last in the nation**, sending a clear message to anyone who believes in equality for LGBT people to stay away from our state.
- Governor Strickland support this legislation and looks forward to signing it into law when it reaches his desk.

Ohio lawmakers should pass the Equal Housing and Employment Act sending a clear message; discrimination will not be tolerated in Ohio. It's time to do what's right.

¹HRC.org

²http://w3.hrc.org/template.cfm?Section=Search_the_Database&Template=/CustomSource/WorkNet/srch.cfm&searchtypeid=4&searchSubTypeID=1

³Ibid

⁴Equality Ohio Education Fund Local Jurisdiction Ratings, 3.1.09