



The Equality Act

Americans are united by the fundamental principle that every person should be treated equally under the law. Our federal civil rights laws play an essential role in furthering that goal, but in 30 states LGBTQ+ people are at risk of being fired, refused housing, or denied services simply because of who they are. Nearly two-thirds of LGBTQ+ Americans report experiencing discrimination in their everyday lives, making it a real and persistent problem. Our nation can and must do better.

STRENGTHENING AND EXPANDING CIVIL RIGHTS LAWS

The Equality Act strengthens existing civil rights laws and provides consistent non-discrimination protections for LGBTQ+ people nationwide. These protections apply to employment, housing, credit, education, public spaces and services, jury service, and federally funded programs. The Act:

- Explicitly protects LGBTQ+ people by adding sexual orientation and gender identity as protected characteristics under current civil rights laws.
- Modernizes existing laws to prohibit discrimination of any kind in retail stores, service providers, and transportation services.
- Defines sex discrimination to include pregnancy and childbirth as well as assumptions about how someone *should* act based on their gender, known as “sex stereotyping.”
- Prohibits the misuse of the Religious Freedom Restoration Act (RFRA) to justify discrimination.

The Equality Act has unprecedented support from the vast majority of Americans. The nonpartisan Public Religion Research Institute found that over 70% of people supported a bill like the Equality Act, including a majority of Democrats, Republicans and Independents. There is also unprecedented bipartisan support from members of Congress, including more than 230 House and 46 Senate co-sponsors.

AFFIRMING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AND LGBTQ+ EQUALITY

Religious freedom and non-discrimination protections are complementary, not contradictory, values. Every person deserves to live without fear of discrimination or coercion. This is equally true for people of all genders, sexual orientations, and beliefs.

The Equality Act ensures that LGBTQ+ people – including religious and non-religiously affiliated people – enjoy the same freedoms under the law as their neighbors. It also strengthens existing civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination on the basis of religion by making sure these laws address contemporary challenges. The Act does not require any person to change their religious beliefs nor does it compel religious institutions to participate in activities that violate the tenets of their faith.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

Interfaith Alliance is committed to protecting the dignity and safety of LGBTQ+ Americans, including many beloved members of our faith communities. By joining us, you place yourself firmly on the side of religious freedom and LGBTQ+ equality. With your support, Interfaith Alliance will continue to champion civil rights measures that benefit us all and beat back laws that enable discrimination under the guise of religious liberty. You can find out more about our commitment to LGBTQ+ rights by signing up for our email list at www.interfaithalliance.org.