

From: Keating, Kathleen (HOU)

Sent: Wednesday, May 25, 2011 2:21 PM

To: HOU-DL - HOUSE AIDES; HOU-DL - HOUSE REPS; SEN-DL-ALLSTAFF; SEN-DL-SENATORS

Subject: Nevada's New Law Protecting Transgender People From Discrimination

Dear Colleagues,

Please see the following press release on Nevada becoming the 14th state to prohibit discrimination against transgender people. Nevada's Republican governor signed this measure into law this week. Nevada will join the District of Columbia, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Vermont, Iowa, Oregon, and Washington in protecting transgender people from discrimination.

As you likely know, Representative Byron Rushing and I are lead sponsors of H.502, An Act relative to transgender equal rights (filed as S.764 by Senators Downing and Chang-Diaz). This bill would allow Massachusetts to join the 14 states, 133 cities and counties, and our nation's capital in protecting our transgender residents from discrimination.

Thank you,

Carl Sciortino

State Representative

State House, Room 472

[617-722-2013](tel:617-722-2013)

Carl.Sciortino@mahouse.gov

Massachusetts Transgender Equal Rights Coalition Congratulates Nevada On New Law Protecting Transgender Workers From Discrimination

14 states, District of Columbia, and 100s of businesses now prohibit discrimination against transgender people

For Immediate Release

Contact: Gunner Scott: [617-778-0519](tel:617-778-0519)

Kara Suffredini: [617-878-2300](tel:617-878-2300)

May 25, 2011

BOSTON—Nevada Republican Gov. Brian Sandoval signed into law yesterday a measure banning employment discrimination based on gender identity and expression. Nevada is the 14th state to prohibit workplace discrimination against transgender people.

“We applaud Nevada for protecting all residents,” said Gunner Scott, executive director of the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition. “Everyone should have the same opportunities to work, and this bill will help Nevada residents who are transgender support themselves and their families.”

“We know that employment discrimination against transgender people is costing the state of Massachusetts at least \$5 million a year in lost income tax revenues and increased expenditures on public health insurance coverage,” said MassEquality Executive Director Kara Suffredini. “Nearly 100 businesses in Massachusetts, our Executive Branch, and 14 other states, including three of our New England neighbors and the District of Columbia, have put protections in place for transgender people. We applaud Nevada lawmakers for working in bipartisan fashion to take this important step and urge lawmakers on Beacon Hill to join the chorus calling for passage this bill.”

On Wednesday, June 8, the Joint Committee on the Judiciary will hold a hearing on the Transgender Equal Rights Bill at 1 pm in Gardner Auditorium at the State House. The bill would update Massachusetts' nondiscrimination and hate crimes laws to include transgender people. The 13 other states, in addition to Nevada and the District of Columbia, that have enacted laws banning discrimination against transgender people are: California, Colorado, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Vermont, Iowa, Oregon, and Washington.

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About the Transgender Equal Rights Coalition

The Transgender Equal Rights Coalition is working to pass “An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights.” (House Bill 502 and Senate Docket Number 536). This law would add gender identity and expression to existing Massachusetts civil rights laws, which currently prohibit discrimination on the basis of age, race, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, sex, and marital status in the areas of employment, housing, public accommodations, education, and credit. The bill would also add offenses regarding gender identity or expression to the list of offenses that are subject to treatment as hate crimes. The bill defines gender identity and

expression as “a gender-related identity, appearance, expression, or behavior of an individual, regardless of the individual's assigned sex at birth.” This is consistent with the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination’s past decisions, as well as Boston’s 2002 transgender anti-discrimination ordinance. Members of the coalition include MassNOW; ACLU of Massachusetts; Jane Doe, Inc., The Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence; National Association of Social Workers, MA; Mass AFL-CIO; Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders; Mass Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus; Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition; and MassEquality.