

Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations



Multicultural Growth & Witness

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Testimony on behalf of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations in support of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights"

May 12, 2011

Senator Cynthia S. Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Room 405
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Room 136
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairwoman Creem, Chairman O'Flaherty, and members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary,

Many thanks for this opportunity to share testimony in support of an Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights. My name is Delfin Bautista, I write on behalf of the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations (UUA) to ask for your favorable report of this important piece of legislation that seeks to protect the dignity and livelihood of all individuals, regardless of their gender identity and expression.

The UUA has a well established presence in Massachusetts with 140 congregations across the state. At the core of the UUA is the responsibility to lift up the worth and dignity of all people, especially those who are marginalized. As people of faith and people of good will, we have strived to fully embrace and celebrate trans-identified individuals in our congregations and communities.

Last November, as people across the world commemorated Transgender Day of Remembrance, to honor the countless individuals who have lost their lives to hate crimes, UUA President Rev. Peter Morales, our denominational head, issued a statement. He said, "I am reminded that in a society still clinging to rigid ideas about gender, our brothers and sisters who are gender non-conforming risk their very lives just to honor their authentic selves."

As a religious tradition that strives to be in solidarity with the transgender community, we are mindful that our trans-congregants in Massachusetts have no recourse under state law if they are discriminated against due to their gender identity or expression. A recent study by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce highlights the disproportionate number of transgender individuals who experience discrimination and harassment; reporting that 63% of transgender individuals had experienced a serious act of discrimination that majorly impacted their life, and 23% had experienced a "catastrophic" level of discrimination. As just one example, 26% had lost a job and 50% were harassed on the job for being trans or gender non-conforming. The lack of recourse for undue discrimination and harassment in Massachusetts relegates transgender citizens to second-class citizenship, creating a life of struggle and hardship to prove one's personhood, worth, and dignity.

However, like you, all who live beyond the binaries of gender are people, period. Transgender people are churchgoers, employees, employers, tax-payers, students, voters, members of families, and heads of households. Many of our trans-congregants in Massachusetts are harassed, denied housing, unjustly fired, and victims of hate crimes—

why, simply because they are who they are and because they seek to live a life with authenticity and integrity. It is unjust that under current Massachusetts state law all does not truly mean all and that equality does not fully embrace all citizens.

On behalf of Unitarian Universalist congregations and fellowships in Massachusetts, I ask that you as lawmakers ensure that ALL people in Massachusetts are treated and protected as full persons. I ask that you follow the leads of 13 other states and the District of Columbia to expand Massachusetts' non-discrimination statute and hate-crimes law so that all residents may live their lives free of discrimination, harassment, and violence.

As senators and representatives you represent transgender children, adults, couples, and families in your districts. Do not relegate your own constituents to the silence of the margins. Instead, lift up their whole lives as sacred. Stand with them in love and justice to ensure that their inherent worth and dignity is embraced and celebrated with equity and compassion.

Please support the Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights.

Thank you for your time and for this opportunity to offer the UUA's support for this important and much needed piece of legislation.

In faith,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Delfin W. Bautista" followed by a stylized flourish.

Delfin W. Bautista
LGBT Ministries Program Coordinator
Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations

DONNA M. CRUZ
56 Hayward Street
Hopkinton, MA 01748
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Saljoy11@juno.com

May 16, 2011

House Chair Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Room 136
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Mr. O'Flaherty:

I am writing to urge you to support "An Act Relative to Gender-Based Discrimination and Hate Crimes", introduced by Representatives Carl Sciortino and Byron Rushing, and Senator Downing. This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, lending, housing, education, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression.

I believe this bill is important because transgender people and others whose gender does not conform to rigid stereotypes are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, transgender people are routinely fired by their employers either before or after transitioning from one sex to another; many others remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility and misunderstanding about transgender people. Widespread prejudices about how "real men" or "real women" should look or act often lead to harassment and unfair treatment in public accommodations, housing, and credit transactions. Transgender and non-transgender students are often bullied and even assaulted and lose educational opportunities when they don't conform to stereotypes of how boys and girls should look or act. This law would strengthen the ability of schools in our state to protect all students.

With the passage of this law, Massachusetts would send a clear message to all citizens of Massachusetts, especially employers, landlords, and providers of public accommodations, that all people are entitled to the full protection of the law, regardless of their gender identity or expression. By addressing critical areas where people experience harassment, discrimination, and violence, this law would increase the productivity and safety of employees, consumers, residents, and students.

House Chair Eugene L. O'Flaherty

May 16, 2011

Page 2

Please help Massachusetts join the many communities, including the states of Rhode Island and Maine, which have already provided protection to their citizens' right to safely define and express their gender as they choose.

Sincerely,


Donna M. Cruz

May 15, 2011

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Room 136
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Representative O'Flaherty,

I am writing to ask for your support in passing the legislation entitled "**An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights**", **House Bill 502**.

My name is David Hardy. I am a resident of Hingham, a retired Boston Public Schools teacher, a GED instructor in the GLBTQ community and the proud father of three sons. Like all parents, my wife and I are proud of our sons.

Our oldest son is an EMT and a Combat Medic in the Mass. National Guard. He recently returned from active duty in Kabul, Afghanistan. We worry about him.

Our second oldest son is a college graduate. He is currently working as a carpenter and hopes to one day have his own business. He is also an avid, highly skilled rock-climber with experience all across the country. We worry about him.

Our youngest son is a college graduate, magna cum laude. He is working to build a private practice in Music Therapy. He is transgender. We really worry about him.

All three of our sons are solid, contributing citizens deserving of all the privileges and protections of our laws. Yet, only two of our sons fully receive these protections. Because of his gender identity, our transgender son could easily be the target of harassment or violence. He could be the victim of discrimination in housing or in the workplace. These grievances could not be adequately addressed under current state law. It is manifestly unfair and very frustrating to us that Massachusetts State Law does not afford him and, so many other people, the equal protections that are afforded to his brothers.

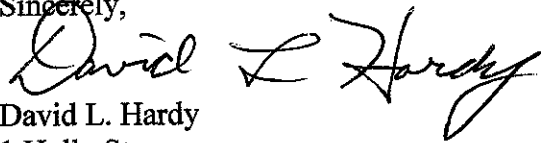
As a teacher in Boston, the safety of children was always a major concern and often a source of frustration. As a GED instructor in the GLBTQ community, I met students who, because of their gender identity, had to face the threat of harassment, bullying, violence and discrimination regularly in their daily lives. These problems were some of the reasons why they were in a GED program rather than their regular high school.

It is dismaying to have to come back year after year to ask for the passage of legislation so badly needed.

In the past our Commonwealth of Massachusetts has set a high standard of forward thinking and courageous action in so many areas of human rights. It is a great source of frustration to my wife and I that the Legislature has moved so slowly in providing protections in the realm of gender identity.

It is time for Massachusetts to take a strong and positive step forward. We urge a favorable vote on **"An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights, House Bill 502."**

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David L. Hardy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "D" at the beginning.

David L. Hardy

1 Holly St.

Hingham, MA 02043

(781) 740-2259

dlhardy@verizon.net

May 10, 2011

Senator Cynthia Creem

Joint Committee on the Judiciary

A testimony on the need for passage of An act Relative to transgender equal rights,

My name is Janice Josephine Carney,

I live in Beverly Mass 01915.

I am a Service Connected Disabled Vietnam Veteran / a retired federal employee.

In 1999 months before, I began by life as an open transgender woman, I had two part-time jobs. I was a substitute teacher and a church sexton. Within six months they stopped calling me even though there was a strong need for experienced part time teachers. The church by way of harassment made life unbearable for me. For ten years I got nothing but praise as John. In less than ninety days as Janice: as the minister put it; "No one is forcing you to keep the job, I will accept your resignation any time."

I have been denied apartments rentals, with management personnel telling me that I will not fit in.

I am 100% sure that if the state of Massachusetts takes a legal stance to make discrimination in housing and employment, based on gender indemnity/gender expression, illegal; that transgender citizens life's will be improved.

As A Transgender Disabled Veteran that put my life at risk in Vietnam, My life would be much better if I knew that being transgender does not somehow make me less then, that being transgender allows ridicule, allows harassment, allows discrimination as a social norm in my home state of Massachusetts .

Janice Josephine Carney

2102 Broadwater Dr
Beverly Ma 01915

Janice Josephine Carney@gmail.com



the women's lunch place
dignity is everything

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

As the Executive Director of The Women's Lunch Place, I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764). This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It also adds 'gender identity or expression' to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people.

At the Women's Lunch Place, we have many transgendered guests. We see firsthand the horrible toll discrimination, hostility and misunderstanding can take. The inequality and lack of basic protections afforded the Transgender Community has a direct and negative effect on many of their lives, resulting in issues such as homelessness, difficulties finding employment, severe mental health problems, and substance addiction. In countless dehumanizing ways, transgender people are denied opportunities and services for their basic needs, as well as the ability to be productive members of society. Transgendered people face overwhelming obstacles in many aspects of their lives, many of which we take for granted.

This legislation is vital to our community. I urge you to support this legislation, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to join 13 other jurisdictions, including Washington D.C. and dozens of municipalities, which already protect their transgender residents in this country. Once again, we can take our rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

Sincerely,

Sharon Reilly

Sharon Reilly
Executive Director

the women's lunch place
67 newbury street
boston, ma 02116
617.267.1722
womenslunchplace.org

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Executive Director
Sharon Reilly

May 9, 2011

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764). This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It also adds 'gender identity or expression' to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people.

The Victim Rights Law Center (VRLC) is the first nonprofit law center in the country to provide free civil legal services to victims of rape and sexual assault in Massachusetts. This bill is important because transgender people throughout the Commonwealth are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and, in the VRLC's over 10 years worth of experience, targeted for sexual violence.

This legislation, therefore, is vital to our community. As has been shown in several national surveys, transgender people face overwhelming obstacles in many aspects of their lives, many of which we take for granted. They are often subject to heightened scrutiny just because of who they are. In countless dehumanizing ways, transgender people are denied opportunities and services for their basic needs, as well as the ability to be productive members of society. The Massachusetts Legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message: by passing this the Transgender Equal Rights Bill, the Legislature makes it clear that we value our transgender residents and will protect them against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this legislation, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens and sexual violence victims in Massachusetts. It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to join 13 other jurisdictions, including Washington D.C., and dozens of municipalities that already protect their transgender residents in this country, and once again take its rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Stacy Malone, Esq.

Executive Director



BOSTON : VRLC : 115 BROAD STREET, 3RD FLOOR : BOSTON, MA 02110 : P: 617-399-6720 : F: 617-399-6722
PORTLAND : VRLC : 520 SW YAMHILL, SUITE 200 : PORTLAND, OR 97204 : P: 503-274-5477 : F: 503-295-6679

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Room 136
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Representative O'Flaherty:

My name is Dee Halzack and I am writing, as a long-time registered Massachusetts voter (living in the state since 1972), in support of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights". I urge you to release the bill from committee. It is long past time that the transgender community is afforded the same equal protections from discrimination as the rest of our residents. I support the bill on religious, humanitarian, and civic grounds.

As a Unitarian Universalist, my faith calls me to oppose all forms of discrimination. Discrimination is actually a violation of our religious principles, which affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person.

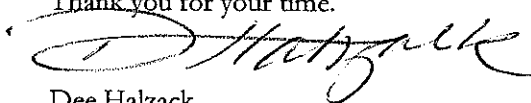
As one who was picked on in school for simply having a "funny" last name and no money, I am only too aware of how much a part of human nature it is to exclude those who are somehow different, and how cruel people can be, on the slightest pretext. Which makes it that much more important to put legislation in place to protect those who stand out as different. People who are very different are feared by some, which is the basis of some of the cruelest forms of bias-based behavior. No one should be subjected to cruelty simply because someone else doesn't accept who they are.

While you can't change human nature, you CAN protect transgender people from discrimination that prevents them from finding a good job and a decent place to live. And by doing so, you will also send a message of acceptance that needs to be heard so that they can more fully participate in our society.

Finally, as a tax payer, I am angry that discrimination is allowed to keep people in poor circumstances and force them to depend on public assistance. According to studies I have seen, transgender people are more likely to be in low-paying jobs that put them in that category. According to a just-released study by the Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Law and Public Policy, employment discrimination against transgender residents of Massachusetts may be costing us millions of dollars every year. They estimate that public health care insurance ALONE is costing \$3 million dollars.

For all these reasons I urge you to release the bill from committee and allow it to move forward. We would not be the first State to have such a law on the books. Hopefully we won't be the last. With the current makeup of the US Congress, it is unlikely that the necessary Federal bill will advance. At least we can protect the citizens of this state.

Thank you for your time.



Dee Halzack
(Registered voter name: Dorothy E. Halzack)
318 Pawtucket St
Lowell MA 01854

Jerry Sokolow
118 Foster Rd.
Swampscott, MA 01907

Tel: 781-588-3099
Email: jls781@comcast.net

May 9, 2011

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Room 136
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Representative O'Flaherty:

I am writing in support of An ACT RELATIVE TO TRANSGENDER EQUAL RIGHTS.

This bill is important to me because I believe all residents, including transgender people, should be treated fairly and equally by the laws of our state. All hardworking people in our state, including transgender people, should have the chance to make a living and provide for themselves and their families without the fear of discrimination.

I am an independent business owner working in Salem, MA.
I personally know people who have had difficulty obtaining employment because of being transgender.

I take issue with the fact that many qualified people are being passed over for suitable employment based solely on their gender expression.

I believe that if the Transgender Rights Act is passed it will send a message and act as a green light to say that it is acceptable to employ people who are transgender and give them protections under the law.

I know this is a tougher challenge for many citizens to accept than racial discrimination was. It gets all of us to ask the uncomfortable question of "what is gender ?"

In this age of acceptance of same-sex marriage, we are well on our way towards tolerance of people of all types.

Transgender individuals are citizens, parents and voters and as such deserve opportunities to be able to provide for themselves and their families.

I ask for your support of this act.

Massachusetts can be an example for rest of the country.

Just as we have done with health care for the citizens our our state, so too can we create an environment of tolerance for our transgender citizens.

Sincerely,



Jerry Sokolow



May 13, 2011

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem, Chair
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty, Chair
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

RE: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights (H502/S764)

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am writing today to ask you to support the passage of H502/S764 "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights." Jane Doe Inc., the Massachusetts Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence, is a social change organization committed to addressing the root causes of sexual and domestic violence, and promoting justice, safety and healing for survivors. On behalf of our membership of 60 community-based sexual assault and domestic violence programs that provide direct services to victims and survivors of sexual and domestic violence, we are proud to affirm our support for this legislation. This bill proposes to prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It also adds "gender identity or expression" to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender and gender non-confirming people.

Jane Doe Inc. supports this legislation because we believe that gender stereotypes and prejudices limit an individual's ability to live a full and productive life, free of violence and fear. The very foundation of the movement against violence against women is based on the understanding and experience of oppression as manifested in sexism, racism and homophobia and other forms of discrimination. Transgender people throughout the Commonwealth are often harmed by harassment, discrimination and violence. Widespread prejudices about how "real men" or "real women" should look or act often lead to harassment and unfair treatment in public accommodations, housing, credit transactions and can contribute to the commission of hate crimes.

This legislation is vital to our community and represents an important step toward equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. I ask you to strongly oppose all forms of violence and to support civil rights for everyone by giving a favorable recommendation for passage of this legislation without delay.

Sincerely,

Mary R. Lauby, Executive Director

May 13, 2011

Dear Chairs of the Judiciary Committee,

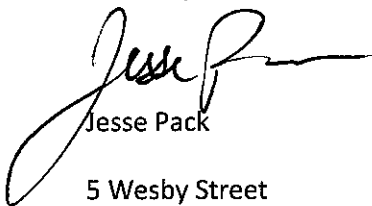
My name is Jesse Pack, I am a resident of Worcester, I am a registered voter, and I am also a member of the transgender community. I am writing to urge you to support the legislation entitled "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights". This legislation is crucial to protect the rights of transgender residents of Massachusetts, particularly in areas like Worcester where there are no local ordinances to protect transgender people.

In addition to being a transgender person, I am also a social service provider. I am currently the Director of Prevention and Education at AIDS Project Worcester, where I have been steadily employed since 2004. However, many members of my community are not as fortunate as me in that they cannot live and work openly as transgender without fear of stigma, discrimination, or mistreatment. As a social servant, I receive calls for help from fellow transgender people on a regular basis. The majority of these complaints are related to anti-transgender discrimination in employment and housing. A recent national survey of transgender people found that of respondents living in Massachusetts, 76% experienced harassment or mistreatment at their job, 20% were fired from their jobs, and 39% were not hired because of their transgender status. I have attached a copy of this study's findings for you to review. As a service provider, I can tell you that these findings reflect my community's day-to-day reality, because I field their distressed calls and emails on a daily basis. Each number on the attached piece of paper represents a real human being whose life has been ruined or made unnecessarily painful or difficult due to anti-transgender bias and discrimination.

The current situation of rampant discrimination against people like me is unacceptable and is, frankly, an embarrassment to our otherwise great state. I therefore strongly urge you to treat this piece of legislation favorably, as its passage will save lives.

If you have any questions regarding what I have written to you, please contact me.

Sincerely,



Jesse Pack

5 Wesby Street

Worcester MA 01609

(508) 755-3773 (office)

(774) 641-3337 (cell)

Treasa de Gruyl
13-A Pleasant St.
Ware, MA 01082
May 23, 2011

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764).

This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It adds 'gender identity or expression' to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.

This bill is important to me because as a trans woman it is still legal to discriminate against me because of my gender expression throughout most of the Commonwealth. Finding an understanding employer can be difficult for trans people. For instance, I am currently not employed even though I am qualified to work as either a baker—which I went to school for—or as a computer programmer—for which I have over ten years of experience. I understand that a law prohibiting discrimination is not a guarantee of employment, but it would remove one hurdle from the process of obtaining and keeping a job as a trans person.

Transgender people throughout the Commonwealth are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, Bay State employers have fired transgender people either before or after transitioning their gender, while many other transgender people in the state remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility, and misunderstanding about who they are.

This legislation, therefore, is vital to our community. In countless dehumanizing ways, transgender people are denied opportunities and services for their basic needs, as well as the ability to be productive members of society. The Massachusetts Legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message by passing "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" Bill. This bill makes it clear that we value our transgender residents and will protect them against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this legislation, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to join 13 other jurisdictions, including Washington D.C., and the hundreds of municipalities, including Boston, Cambridge, Northampton, and Amherst, that already protect their transgender residents in this country, and once again take its rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

Sincerely,


Treasa de Gruyl

Counsel I

351 Pleasant St., PMB 222
Northampton, MA 01060
May 22, 2011

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Room 136
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Dear Rep. O'Flaherty,

I am writing to ask you and the other members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764). This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It adds "gender identity or expression" to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.

Transgender people throughout the Commonwealth are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, Bay State employers have fired transgender people either before or after transitioning, while many other transgender people in the state remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility, and misunderstanding about who they are.

My husband and I (both cisgendered) live in Northampton, MA, a vibrant and creative city which owes much of its success to its diversity. We've become friends with several transgender men and women in the course of our gay-rights advocacy. These are some of the bravest people you could meet, who take the risk of being "out" in order to exercise leadership in our community. They are musicians, artists, advocates for HIV+ and homeless youth, and preservers of GLBT history. One friend, though struggling to find work himself because of anti-transgender discrimination, organized a free potluck for the poor and homeless during this year's Northampton Pride. These valuable citizens deserve the same civil rights protections that you and I have.

No one should be denied basic economic security and physical safety because they don't fit our stereotypes of male and female. This issue doesn't just concern transgender people, important as they are. Discrimination against women and gays also springs from this hostile stereotyping. Protecting "gender identity or expression" is a natural extension of values that the Commonwealth has already embraced.

I still have a lot to learn about transgender identity. Not everyone in this community defines it the same way. Some might say they always really felt like the opposite gender, while others find their true selves by occupying the territory between fixed gender roles. One thing I have learned is that transgender identity is not a "lifestyle". Like sexual orientation, it's something fundamental to the person—and one that the rest of us, in my opinion, have no right to judge. Transgender people aren't harming society; if anything, they're *helping* us move beyond

the gender-policing that has oppressed women for centuries. As a feminist, I look to transgender people as role models.

It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to join 13 other jurisdictions, including Washington D.C., and the hundreds of municipalities, including Boston, Cambridge, Northampton, and Amherst, that already protect their transgender residents in this country. I hope I can count on your support of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights".

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Reiter', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jendi Reiter

JBReiter@aol.com
(413) 586-6910

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764).

This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It adds 'gender identity or expression' to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.

As a transgender young adult, this bill is important to me because it protects me from workplace discrimination. When I was beginning the process of gender transition in rural Western Massachusetts, I experienced harassment in my workplace and had difficulty advocating for myself. Now, two years later, I enjoy stable full-time employment in Boston, with co-workers who respect my gender identity. I believe that it is vitally important for the laws and attitudes that protect transgender people in Boston to extend to the rest of Massachusetts.

Transgender people throughout the Commonwealth are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, Bay State employers have fired transgender people either before or after transitioning their gender, while many other transgender people in the state remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility, and misunderstanding about who they are.

This legislation, therefore, is vital to our community. In countless dehumanizing ways, transgender people are denied opportunities and services for their basic needs, as well as the ability to be productive members of society. The Massachusetts Legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message by passing "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" Bill. This bill makes it clear that we value our transgender residents and will protect them against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this legislation, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to join 13 other jurisdictions, including Washington D.C., and the hundreds of municipalities, including Boston, Cambridge, Northampton, and Amherst, that already protect their transgender residents in this country, and once again take its rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

Sincerely,

Josiah R. Boivin
11 Clyde St. Apt. 2
Somerville, MA 02145

Counsel

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Greetings, Senator Creem and Representative O'Flaherty, and to the other esteemed members of the Judiciary Committee.

My name is Michelle Figueiredo, I am a 40 year old trans woman from Cohasset, MA. I am writing to you to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764). I would also like to share with you some of my experiences from my transition and why these bills will mean so much to so many in the transgender community for their own transitions.

As many transgender people do, for many years of my life I struggled with my identity before I learned to accept myself and that this is who I am: a happy, healthy and proud transgender woman. I was depressed for many years however, and actually weighed almost 400 lbs at one point at the age of 37, with high blood pressure and the beginnings of diabetes. I was consciously eating myself to death, and deep down didn't care about myself or life.

When I finally began coming out to my friends and family, and eventually my employer and coworkers, I admit, I was terrified of losing everyone and of losing my job. However, I have been extremely fortunate since I began transitioning in 2007. Almost every one of my friends and family members has fully accepted me and treated me with love and respect. My social life has blossomed and right now I feel as happy and alive as I ever have in my entire life. I have begun dating, something I never felt comfortable with since I wasn't comfortable in my own skin. In addition, I have been able to lose over 100 lbs and even ran a 26.2 mile marathon on October 10, 2010 in Lowell, MA, and have no high blood pressure and no diabetes.

I am also one of the lucky few in the transgender community within this Commonwealth as I work for a wonderful company that is committed to diversity and its employees. I work for State Street Corp. and have been with them for 10 years. I cannot begin to tell you how amazing and supportive the company has been for me in my transition. My experience and my current life would not be as wonderful as it has been without State Street's support.

My transition on the job at State Street began in July 2008. When it began, I was very nervous for fear of potentially losing my job, as happens for many other transgender people with other employers because transgender people do not have protections in employment. However, I was aware the company had added gender identity to its non discrimination policy, as I hope the State can do by passing these bills. Human Resources made it clear to me that the company is 100% committed to diversity no questions asked. They worked with me to address this with my coworkers and peers, including many people I work with around the world. Since being able to come out and live as I truly am, I have actually thrived in my job and have had nothing but the utmost support from every level of the corporation.

This positive experience with my company should be used as a role model for the State. Passing the bill will allow for others out there who are also struggling with their own gender identity and gender expression to feel more secure, healthy and confident in many areas of their lives. It will also allow for others who are not transgendered and have not struggled with discrimination and hate to see that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts supports and advocates for ALL ITS CITIZENS in all their diverse splendor. I urge you to pass this bill. Thank you for your time and energy.

Sincerely,
Michelle Figueiredo
406 North Main St.
Cohasset, MA 02025
781-383-1432



19 May 2011

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Dear Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764).

This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It adds 'gender identity or expression' to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.

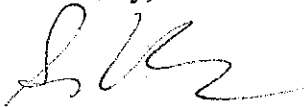
This bill is important to me because people I care about cannot find employment, are harassed, denied rights and are treated as second class citizens due to their gender identity or expression. I want the people I know and love and people I will never meet to have the same rights and protections that I have. If all people are created equal then we should treat all people equally.

Transgender people throughout the Commonwealth are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, Bay State employers have fired transgender people either before or after transitioning their gender, while many other transgender people in the state remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility, and misunderstanding about who they are.

This legislation, therefore, is vital to our community. In countless dehumanizing ways, transgender people are denied opportunities and services for their basic needs, as well as the ability to be productive members of society. The Massachusetts Legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message by passing "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" Bill. This bill makes it clear that we value our transgender residents and will protect them against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this legislation, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to join 13 other jurisdictions, including Washington D.C., and the hundreds of municipalities, including Boston, Cambridge, Northampton, and Amherst, that already protect their transgender residents in this country, and once again take its rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

Sincerely,



Sean K. Benedix
51 Montebello Rd #6
Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764).

This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It adds 'gender identity or expression' to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.


This bill is very important to me because I am a transgender woman. I walk through this great state of ours every day, unnoticed. But I carry with me an anxiety about my rights as a person under the law and a fear of discrimination or harassment that could happen at any time. Please send a message to the citizens of this state that it is not ok to discriminate against people because of their gender identity or expression, and help to make this great state safer.

Transgender people throughout the Commonwealth are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, Bay State employers have fired transgender people either before or after transitioning their gender, while many other transgender people in the state remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility, and misunderstanding about who they are.

This legislation, therefore, is vital to our community. In countless dehumanizing ways, transgender people are denied opportunities and services for their basic needs, as well as the ability to be productive members of society. The Massachusetts Legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message by passing "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" Bill. This bill makes it clear that we value our transgender residents and will protect them against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this legislation, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to join 13 other jurisdictions, including Washington D.C., and the hundreds of municipalities, including Boston, Cambridge, Northampton, and Amherst, that already protect their transgender residents in this country, and once again take its rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

Sincerely,



Alana Martin
34 Forest St Apt BR
Arlington, MA 02476
857-204-7946

SARA G. SCHNORR
11 Oak Street, Unit 26
Wellesley, Massachusetts 02482-4731
781.489.5939 (home)
617.510.1069 (cell)
sara.schnorr@comcast.net (home)

May 23, 2011

Counsel

VIA EMAIL AND REGULAR MAIL

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Re: Support for the 2011 Transgender Equal Rights Bill

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and other Members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary:

The purpose of this letter is twofold: first, to express my support for the enactment of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights," House Bill No. 00502/Senate Bill No. 00764 (the "Bill") during the current legislative session; and second, respectfully to ask the Joint Committee on the Judiciary (the "Committee") to vote to report the Bill favorably out of the Committee with the strongest possible recommendation for its passage in its current form.

The Bill makes it an unlawful practice to discriminate in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations based upon a person's gender identity or gender expression. The Bill also adds "gender identity or expression" as a protected class under the Commonwealth's existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.

Adding gender identity and expression as protected classes under the Commonwealth's nondiscrimination laws does not create "special rights." It simply affords protection from discrimination based on irrational and meritless prejudices. The General Assembly has already recognized the need for such protections and the appropriateness of such protections by passing and expanding the nondiscrimination statutes over many years. At issue now is whether the General Assembly will pass the Bill so your fellow Massachusetts residents who are transsexual or transgender are

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
May 23, 2011

entitled as a matter of state-wide law to be free from discrimination, or whether Massachusetts will continue to allow its transsexual and transgender citizens to be marginalized legally and to suffer discrimination solely on the basis of their identity, for simply being who they are. Hard-working family members, friends and neighbors should not be denied job opportunities, fired, denied access to housing, credit, education and public accommodations or otherwise be discriminated against just because of their gender identity or expression.

I cannot overstate the importance of nondiscrimination laws. Symbolically, they say to citizens of Massachusetts: judge your fellow citizens by their integrity, character, and talents, not their gender identity, their sexual orientation, their race, religion, or ethnicity. Nondiscrimination laws also say that irrational hate or fear has no place in Massachusetts workplaces, housing and places of public accommodation.

It is time to bring Massachusetts laws in line with the reality of contemporary American life and follow what the Governor has done for state employees and contractors with Executive Order 526, and what the federal government, so many other states and local municipalities have done over the last decade by statutes, ordinances and regulations to protect transsexual and transgender citizens. It will also belatedly bring Massachusetts law into line with the corporate world here in this great Commonwealth. Fourteen of the largest private law firms in Boston and over 150 other private companies and nonprofit organizations in Massachusetts – including many of the largest and most respected companies - already have adopted nondiscrimination policies to protect their transsexual and transgender employees in the workplace. These businesses and organizations understand that embracing fairness, equal opportunity and diversity is good for business and the community. It is now the General Assembly's turn to act.

Though you probably do not know it, Massachusetts already has a number transsexual and transgender residents who are leading incredibly successful, stable lives in their homes, in their neighborhoods and in their workplaces and who contribute immeasurably to their communities, the Commonwealth, and our country; they are doctors, lawyers, accountants, educators, engineers, teachers, managers, small business owners, musicians, clergy, police officers, firefighters, electricians, contractors, civil servants, waitpersons, parents, children, brothers and sisters. I should know, because I proudly count myself among that number.

I am a 62-year old male-to-female transsexual and a senior partner in one of Boston's oldest and largest private law firms, who transitioned in 2009 quite openly and publicly while continuing my successful law practice and the pro bono work I do for a non-profit housing group in Wellesley. My gender transition has been successful in no small part for two reasons: first, my law firm's demonstrated commitment to me to implement enthusiastically the firm's nondiscrimination, equal opportunity and non-harassment policies that protect its transsexual and transgender employees; and second, my major clients' support and acceptance of my transition.

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
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When I met individually with my key clients in July of 2009 to disclose my upcoming gender transition, each one asked, "Does this mean you will be leaving your firm or retiring?" When I assured them no, that I intended to continue practicing law, each breathed a sigh, saying, "So, you'll still be our lawyer, right?" I responded, "Well, yes I do want to. That's one of the reasons why I wanted to meet with you today, to make sure that you would continue to use me as your lawyer after my transition." Each client looked me in the eye and stated, "It's your mind, your skills as a lawyer, your ability to find creative solution to our legal problems that we admire and have come to rely upon. We also enjoy working with you. It is irrelevant to your value to us as a lawyer if you will now have long hair and a higher pitched voice, wear a dress, and present and express yourself as a woman. Of course you will still be our lawyer!"

But my experiences and those of the small number of other transsexuals and transgender residents who are leading successful and stable lives and who have stable careers are shamefully exceptions to the rule here in Massachusetts. A recent study, *The National Transgender Discrimination Survey*, found that 76 percent of respondents from Massachusetts experienced harassment, mistreatment, or discrimination in employment. Work is central to all of our lives. Our jobs enable us to support our families, develop our talents, contribute to our communities and our country, and realize our dreams. We all share the challenges of an economic downturn. But for far too many hardworking transsexuals and transgender, those pressures are intensified by the fear that they can be denied job opportunities, fired, denied access to public accommodations or otherwise be discriminated against just because of who they are. Transsexual and transgender Massachusetts residents, like everyone else, want their success to reflect their skills, ambition, performance and dedication. But this modest goal is not always a reality.

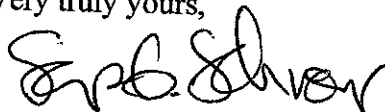
Because Massachusetts has no nondiscrimination protections for transsexual or transgender employees, most employers here in the Commonwealth may legally fire, refuse to hire, or fail to promote an employee. As a result, our transsexual and transgender residents are at a great disadvantage in the workplace. Indeed, I have heard of many instances in which Massachusetts employers have fired transgender people either before or after transitioning their gender, while many other transgender people in the state remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility, and misunderstanding about who they are.

Passage of this Bill, therefore, is vital to our community. In countless dehumanizing ways, most transsexual and transgender Massachusetts residents are denied opportunities and services for their basic needs, as well as the ability to be productive members of society. The General Assembly has a chance this year to send a very different message by passing the Bill, which makes it clear that the Commonwealth values its transsexual and transgender residents and will protect them against discrimination and violence.

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
May 23, 2011

I urge the Committee to support passage of the Bill. Its passage will represent an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for the Commonwealth to join now over 13 other jurisdictions in this country, including Washington D.C., and hundreds of municipalities, including Boston, Cambridge, Northampton, and Amherst, and many of the major employers in Massachusetts that already protect their transsexual and transgender residents. It is right for the Commonwealth once again take its rightful place as a leader and beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

Very truly yours,



Sara G. Schnorr

cc: Representative Alice Hanlon Peisch
Senator Richard J. Ross
Representative Martha Walz

39 Priscilla Road
South Easton, Mass. 02375
May 15, 2011

To
Counsel

Representative Eugene O'Flaherty
State House
Room 136
Boston, Mass. 02133

Dear Representative O'Flaherty,

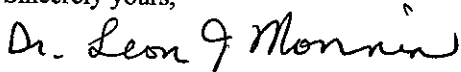
This letter is written to support the bill on the rights of transgendered people. The rights of all people need to be held sacred. Denying these rights is a disservice to all people who believe that all people are created equal and have a right to seek happiness. It is so important that the rights of minority groups be validated. The majority has often felt it has the right to decide the rights of the minority. Two infamous situations come to mind: Nazi Germany and the slavery in our South. When we don't give the minority the rights that are already theirs, we needlessly put them at risk for bigotry and hatred.

I am a school psychologist in the Boston Public Schools. I attended a conference run by T. Berry Brazelton, a noted pediatrician. At the seminar, I spoke with Dr. Heidi Als. She was doing research on premature children. Her studies have questioned that if children do not spend the last trimester in the womb, they do not receive the needed testosterone from the mother, to clearly determine sexual makeup. In her studies, she found that premies that were now in their late teens were showing a rainbow effect in terms of their sexual orientation.

My son is a transgendered young man who was born at 28 weeks. He is a most wonderful individual who has always labored for just causes. He is a most special individual and is so pure and loving. It really upsets me to think that he could be in additional danger because our laws do not give him the protection he needs.

I ask you from the bottom of my heart to move on this bill now.

Sincerely yours,



Dr. Leon J. Momin
39 Priscilla Road
South Easton, Mass 02375
508-238-3297

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

May 23, 2011

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764). This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It adds "gender identity or expression" to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.

I am a voter who moved to the Commonwealth from the Midwest three years ago in order to be closer to my aging parents. I'm very happy that Massachusetts is such a progressive state and am hoping that it will offer legal protections to transgendered people, as it has done with other minority groups. This issue is very important to me because I am a female-to-male transsexual, and I have been refused work because of my transgendered status. I'm 55 years old with over 35 years of training and experience in my profession, and I am a law-abiding citizen. Yet, not long after my gender transition, a solid job offer was suddenly retracted, solely because I filled out a background check form with my previous—obviously female—name. At the time, I felt shocked, and rejected at the core of my being. I had never before been treated as anything other than a valuable and esteemed addition to an organization.

Transgender people like me are regularly disrespected, rejected, harassed, beaten, and even killed. We are prevented from fully participating in society, not because we are a danger to anyone, but because we are wrongly perceived to be. What really happens is that people who misunderstand and fear us cause us lots of problems, including loss of income, education, child custody, social networks, and many other rights, privileges, and benefits that others take for granted. In the end, everyone loses because the contributions we could have been making to our jobs, our schools, our churches, our communities, and our families have been forfeited.

Please support this very important legislation. It will improve the lives of many people.

Sincerely;



Peter F. Ringo
P.O. Box 66

17A Belmont St.
Somerville, MA 02143
May 23, 2011

COINSENT

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Room 136
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Representative O'Flaherty:

I am originally from Chelmsford, Massachusetts and now live in Somerville. I am writing to express my support for *An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights* because I feel strongly that our state should protect the rights of individuals to live as their preferred gender and express their gender identity. I am part of the LGBTQ community, and while I do not identify as transgender myself, many of my friends do. It is wrong for our state to allow this type of discrimination, and it endangers my friends.

In Massachusetts, transgender people are not protected by the full power of the law. They can be fired from their jobs or denied housing because of who they are or how they look. They do not have the same rights as the rest of us to access public accommodations, education, or credit. This discrimination is legal in our state. And it's shameful. No one should be discriminated against solely for being who they are. We should be celebrating the diversity that adds strength and vibrancy to our state, not forcing our residents to choose between being themselves and economic security, opportunity, or safety.

A friend of mine directly experienced the consequences of coming out as transgender. Despite excellent credentials and work experience, he was pushed by his boss to resign. Although the company praised his work before they knew he was transgender, as soon as he told them, they fired him. Many others experience the same problems. For example, the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition's website currently features three stories of residents who were fired from jobs because of their gender identity and expression. Because I know these stories, I know that we need to pass *An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights* so that my transgender friends have the power of the law behind them when they face these types of situations. I strongly urge all legislators to push this bill to a vote and pass this bill so that transgender constituents around the state can have the legal protections that many of us take for granted.

The bill before the House and Senate would provide our transgender friends, neighbors, family members, and coworkers with basic legal protection from discrimination. Every day, transgender people in Massachusetts face discrimination and harassment. And this discrimination isn't just annoying: it's serious, pervasive, and dangerous. Across the country, 97 percent of transgender people reported experiencing harassment or discrimination in the workplace, and 26 percent reported losing a job due to their gender identity or expression. This

discrimination can lead to dire outcomes like poverty and homelessness. The national unemployment rate for transgender people is double the rate for the general population. A 2006 survey in Massachusetts found that only 25 percent of transgender women had full-time jobs and that 55 percent had been homeless at some point in their life. Clearly, this is not a trivial issue, but instead a critical and urgent one. As long as transgender people continue to lose their jobs and face barriers to accessing housing, public accommodations, credit, or education, it is not enough to profess support for equality. *An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights* would put the force of law behind transgender people like my friends as they try to work, go to school, support their families, and contribute to society. I strongly urge you to do everything within your power to pass this bill as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Rachel Fichtenbaum". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Rachel Fichtenbaum

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764).

This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It adds 'gender identity or expression' to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.

I received my Master's in Social Work from Boston College, and I am a licensed social worker who lives, works, and votes in Boston. The majority of my work is with marginalized youth, many of whom identify as transgender. Countless of these young people have been made homeless, been physically or sexually assaulted, are shunned by their communities, and cannot find jobs. They are young people with so much potential, but they have a government that will not protect them, and it is utterly heartbreaking.

This legislation, therefore, is vital to our community. In countless dehumanizing ways, transgender people are denied opportunities and services for their basic needs, as well as the ability to be productive members of society. The Massachusetts Legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message by passing "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" Bill. This bill makes it clear that we value our transgender residents and will protect them against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this legislation, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to join 13 other jurisdictions, including Washington D.C., and the hundreds of municipalities, including Boston, Cambridge, Northampton, and Amherst, that already protect their transgender residents in this country, and once again take its rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

Sincerely,

M. Rehrig, LCSW

Mick D. Rehrig, LCSW

130 Boylston Street

Boston, MA 02116

Anonymous
(for reasons of privacy and safety)
Plymouth County, Massachusetts

May 23, 2011

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764).

This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It adds 'gender identity or expression' to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.

As the primary caregiver of a 6-year-old trans girl, I know firsthand that it is imperative we provide a safe community for all of our residents. The Commonwealth currently does not do that and my 6-year-old suffers for it. Shame on us for not protecting a child whose only crime is being herself. So far, she is a brilliant child, working well above grade level, but it is a constant fight with the school district to keep her protected. We are gravely concerned about her safety in public places and are saddened that her future options will likely be diminished.

She is happy and secure at home. She does not yet know that people will hurt her in a variety of cruel ways for no reason other than lack of understanding and acceptance. Let us please extend her security beyond our home so that she may live freely and thrive in her community, for she is a leader in the making and we would most certainly fail her if we didn't provide her every opportunity.

If you could know her, you would see that she is amazing and beautiful and you would want to pass this bill just for her. I hope you will anyway and maybe some day I will be able to write you a letter with my name and address printed at the top. But for now, we will maintain our privacy to keep a little girl safe.

Thank you and best regards.

Counsel



Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights
Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing you as the female Co-chair of the Bay State Stonewall Democrats, to urge you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764). This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It adds 'gender identity or expression' to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.

This bill is important to the Bay State Stonewall Democrats because it will protect many the members of our organization from the discrimination to which they have been subjected all of their lives. As the first straight Co-chair of a Stonewall affiliate in the nation, I am proud to urge you to support this bill. I know I would not have to ask you to protect other people who have sought equal rights in Massachusetts over the years, such as people of color or women.

Transgender people throughout the Commonwealth are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, Bay State employers have fired transgender people either before or after transitioning their gender, while many other transgender people in the state remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility, and misunderstanding about who they are.

This legislation, therefore, is vital to our community. In countless dehumanizing ways, transgender people are denied opportunities and services for their basic needs, as well as the ability to be productive members of society. The Massachusetts Legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message by passing "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" Bill. This bill makes it clear that we value our transgender residents and will protect them against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this legislation, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to join 13 other jurisdictions, including Washington D.C., and the hundreds of municipalities, including Boston, Cambridge, Northampton, and Amherst, that already protect their transgender residents in this country, and once again take its rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

Sincerely,

Claire B. Naughton
Claire B. Naughton

Co-chair, Bay State Stonewall Democrats
4 Everett Lane
Foxboro, MA 02035

Lisa M Quinlivan
23 Blackthorn Road
Shrewsbury, MA 01545

Counsel

May 23, 2011

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights

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I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764).

This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It adds 'gender identity or expression' to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.

This bill is important because all people deserve to be respected and to live free of harassment, discrimination, and violence. I have a 16 year old transgender child that endured endless cruelty at school, including having her life threatened by a student and a teacher that randomly confused her gender in a mocking tone. She can't walk down the street in the center of town without people yelling things out the window of their cars. In one case, a passenger in a car threw a bottle at her. Somehow, there seems to be an attitude that she invited the harassment by being transgendered and there are no consequences for such behavior. I gave up the fight with the high school and put her in private school in another town. She is an excellent student and a gifted artist. She is now searching for summer employment which is very difficult. Will anyone give her a chance? What is she learning about a world that just can't treat her as they treat others? Believe me, she would never have chosen this fate. She wants nothing more than to be treated with the same dignity afforded to others and to blend into society. She recently ran a fashion show where she raised money for homeless people in Worcester and previously raised money for the art department at her public school. She has the capacity to be a tremendous contributor but feels she needs to move to New York to do so. What a loss for MA if good people feel they need to move out of state to be recognized as a valued member of her community.

This legislation, therefore, is vital to our community. In countless dehumanizing ways, transgender people are denied opportunities and services for their basic needs, as well as the ability to be productive members of society. The Massachusetts Legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message by passing "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" Bill. This bill makes it clear that we value our transgender residents and will protect them against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this legislation, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to join 13 other jurisdictions, including Washington D.C., and the hundreds of municipalities, including Boston, Cambridge, Northampton, and Amherst, that already protect their transgender residents in this country, and once again take its rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

Sincerely,

Lisa M Quinlivan
23 Blackthorn Road
Shrewsbury, MA 01545

1429 Cambridge Street #1
Cambridge, MA 02139
May 23, 2011

Counsel

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights (H.502/S.764)

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

This year I am making a special appeal to urge your support for the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764). As you know, transgender people are very much like other citizens of our Commonwealth. They are taxpayers, homeowners, family members, parents, and voters. I believe this is an important bill to assure that there are no loopholes through which citizens and taxpayers of the Commonwealth could be fired from their jobs or denied housing, solely on the basis of gender identify or expression.

I have been a support of equal rights for many years. However, this year, the bill has special meaning for me. You see, last summer, almost a year ago now, I was diagnosed with what is clinically known as "gender identify disorder" (essentially, there is a disagreement between my brain and my DNA as to what gender I should be). After over 50 years of keeping this in the closet, I have discovered that this has been unhealthy for me. Furthermore, I was encouraged by my wife and son to seek professional treatment. As a result of that treatment, and with the support of my family, my pastor, friends, as well as my supervisors and colleagues at work, I have decided to change my gender, and proudly become the person I was born to be.

This year, this bill will also protect my rights. This bill will assure I can remain employed in my profession of civil engineering, working at a privately-owned consulting firm, where I have been serving the citizens of the Commonwealth by designing public infrastructure projects which benefit all. My recent projects include the planning for the Green Line Extension to Somerville and Medford, improvements on Revere Beach Boulevard (near Kelly's), roadway and utility improvements at the former Ft. Devens, the MWRA's North Dorchester Bay Combined Sewer Overflow Abatement Project (which eliminated most of the overflows to the

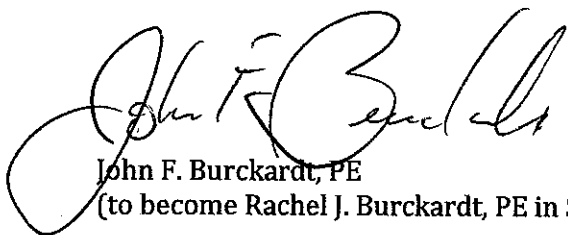
Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
May 23, 2011
Page 2

beaches of South Boston along Day Blvd.), and the relocation of the Green Line at North Station. All of these projects have improved (or will improve) the quality of life for all who live in the Commonwealth. I have worked in civil engineering for over 33 years, mostly on similar projects with a direct benefit to the public.

After my legal change in gender this September, I want to continue serving the people of the Commonwealth by applying my engineering skills to ongoing and future infrastructure projects. This bill will ensure that there is no loophole that would unfairly deny me of this opportunity to benefit other citizens and remain a contributing member of society as a taxpayer and homeowner.

I thank you in advance for your support of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John F. Burckardt". The signature is stylized with large, flowing loops.

John F. Burckardt, PE
(to become Rachel J. Burckardt, PE in Sept. 2011)



P.O. Box 170796
Boston, MA 02117
(617) 424-9595
www.biresource.net

IT'S NOT A PHASE,
IT'S MY LIFE.

OBRC

May 23, 2011

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Consent

Ellyn Ruthstrom
Board President

Representative O'Flaherty:

Stephanie Miserlis
Board Treasurer

Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights

Jennifer Bonardi
Board Clerk

I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764). This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It adds 'gender identity or expression' to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.

Michael Monroe
Board Member

This bill is important to the Bisexual Resource Center because we believe all people should be treated fairly before the law regardless of a person's gender identity or expression. The bisexual community includes transgender individuals who have experienced severe instances of discrimination, violence, and hardship due to their gender expression. For example, Bay State employers have fired transgender people either before or after transitioning their gender, while many other transgender people in the state remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility, and misunderstanding about who they are. We believe it's time for Massachusetts to take this positive step forward to ensure their protection before the law.

Bethany Ramirez
Board Member

Don Thompson
Board Member

This legislation is vital to our community. In countless dehumanizing ways, transgender people are denied opportunities and services for their basic needs, as well as the ability to be productive members of society. The Massachusetts Legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message by passing "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" Bill. This bill makes it clear that we value our transgender residents and will protect them against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this legislation which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to protect their transgender residents, and once again take its rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

Sincerely,

Ellyn Ruthstrom
President, Bisexual Resource Center

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
State House Room 416B
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I live in Massachusetts, and I work with a transgender person. I am writing to ask you to support "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights." This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, lending, housing, education, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It also adds gender identity and expression to the hate crimes statute, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people. It is important to me that all of my co-workers have the same access to employment and opportunities that I do.

I believe this bill is important because transgender people and others whose gender does not conform to rigid stereotypes are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, transgender people are routinely fired by their employers either before or after transitioning from one sex to another; many others remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility and misunderstanding about transgender people. Employment is one of the key areas in which transgender and gender non-conforming people are vulnerable to discrimination, making it hard for them to make a living. I do not want to see this happen to my co-worker.

This legislation is vital to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Transgender people face discrimination in many aspects of their lives. The Massachusetts legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message – passing this bill makes it clear that Massachusetts values all of its residents, and protects all of them equally against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this bill, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for Massachusetts to join the 13 other states and dozens of municipalities that already protect their citizens on this basis, and once again take its rightful place as a leader in the struggle for equality for all people.

Sincerely,

508 654 5591

Testimony of Rabbi Elias Lieberman

Falmouth Jewish Congregation

7 Hatchville Road

East Falmouth, MA 02536

Cowse

Submitted to the Joint Committee on the Judiciary in support of

“An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights”

May 18, 2011

TO: Sen. Creem, Rep. Flaherty, Chairs, & Honorable members of the Joint Committee on the Judiciary

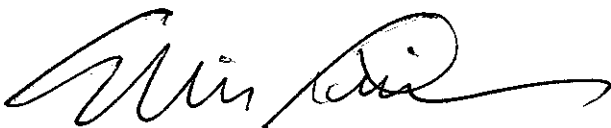
I write as both a clergy person and as a person of faith to express my strong support for “An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights”. I have served as a congregational rabbi for twenty-seven years and in the course of that time have had numerous occasions to come to know people whose gender identity does not fall into stereotypical definitions. I have come to know the very real pain and discrimination to which they are subjected because of their transgender identity.

I have also been privileged to come to know members of Cape Cod’s transgender community and to advocate on their behalf. I have learned much from them and have been tremendously moved by their stories of struggle, pain and courage as they face, on a daily basis, the kind of discrimination that no one deserves to experience.

I represent a faith tradition that is explicit in its insistence that every human being is made in God’s image. It follows that every person is entitled to be treated with dignity. Most especially, with respect to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, this means that every person is entitled to the protection of law against the kind of invidious discrimination routinely visited upon transgender people. These are not strangers to us...they are our neighbors, our children, our relatives, our employees...and your constituents.

It is my heartfelt belief, gained through personal interaction with transgender people, that the granting of the legal protections to them can only strengthen the social fabric of our state. I urge you to move forward this long-overdue piece of legislation for full consideration by the Legislature.

Sincerely,



Elias J. Lieberman
Rabbi

4/1/11

Counsel

Senator Cynthia S. Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Room 405
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Legislators,

I am writing to testify in support to An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights. The first thing I want to say is that I am not transgendered. I am a woman. I am a woman who resides in Cambridge MA and is a registered voter. I am a woman has worked in the commercial construction industry in the Boston area for over 21 years. I wear jeans, flannel shirts and construction boots daily and often get confused as being transgendered or as being male. For the most part, the mistaken identity is usually handled well by the person who has misidentified me, when corrected. But there have been times when I have been greeted with aggressive responses to my atypical appearance. I was once assaulted by a male who, at first mistook me for another male, and then after being heckled by his friends who pointed out that I was a woman, became embarrassed by his mistake. He beat me and my sister in the parking lot of a supermarket, while a couple in the car next to ours watched. He called me a freak.

The statistics regarding violence and discrimination against people who identify as transgender are clear, and more than likely, under reported. I don't think anyone deserves to be beaten, be killed, lose their livelihood or have their basic human rights stripped simply because they are different from what others view as the norm.

This Act is not just about protecting people who identify as transgender, it will also protect voters like me who simply look differently, dress differently and carry themselves differently than what is expected. This is an important Act in that it makes it clear that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will no longer support the type of bigotry and intolerance that transgender people currently face every day in this state. Make no mistake about it: to not support this bill is to advocate that transgender people are second-class constituents of yours, undeserving of the protections of law granted other citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Thank you for your time,

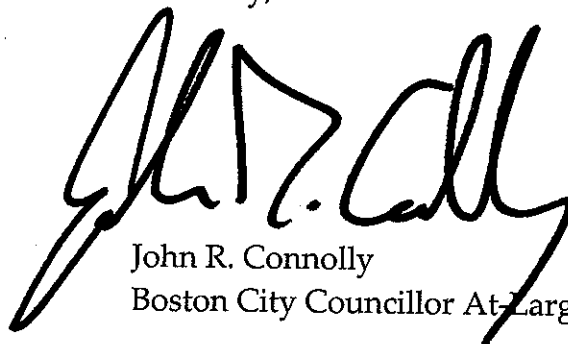
Cheryl Lieteau
17 Kimball Street
Cambridge, MA

treatment in public accommodations, housing, and credit transactions. This is not a standard befitting the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, which has long prided itself on a history of tolerance and defense of civil liberties—especially in the City of Boston.

This legislation, therefore, is vital for our communities. As has been shown in several national surveys, transgender people face overwhelming obstacles in many aspects of their lives. Local advocacy groups such as the Massachusetts Transgender Political Coalition (MTPC), Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD), and many others work to protect Bay State citizens persecuted for their gender identity, but their options are limited without official state support. In countless dehumanizing ways, transgender people are denied opportunities and services for their basic needs, as well as the ability to be productive members of society. The Massachusetts Legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message: by passing the Transgender Equal Rights Bill, the Legislature makes it clear that we value our transgender residents and will protect them against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this legislation, which represents an important step towards full equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. The City of Boston has already completed this critical task, passing a transgender anti-discrimination ordinance as early as 2002. Furthermore, the Boston City Council on March 9, 2011 unanimously voted in support of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights." It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to join 13 other states, Washington D.C., and dozens of municipalities around the country that already protect their transgender residents, and once again take its rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice, and equality for all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Connolly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "C".

John R. Connolly
Boston City Councillor At-Large

May 18, 2011

Counsel

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Room 138
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Representative O'Flaherty,

I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764).

My name is Laurie Wolfe. I went to university and professional school, graduated with honors. I should be on an easy street, but I'm not, because most of my life I had to hide who I was.

I worked at Share as a fundraiser for non-profit organizations, and I coached new fundraisers when we were hiring. I'm a proud member and steward with United Auto Workers local 1596. I'm an activist in the lgbt community. I'm a speaker and trainer with MTPC, the Massachusetts Transgender Working Group, and co-chair of two committees with Keshet, the Jewish LGBT Organization. Things have to be better for those who follow.

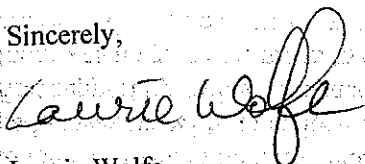
I grew up in NYC in the 50's and 60's. In those days when I told people what I liked, they abandoned me. I had to hide, or I would be living without a friend. The front page of the newspapers showed pictures of police loading paddy wagons with 'men dressed as women' and taking them away to jail. In 1970 I arrived at Tufts, and tried to find support by seeing the school counselor. She listened for 40 minutes, and never said a word. I left knowing there was no place for me in the world. I went into deeper hiding, and dreaded graduating. Questions of survival are secondary when you know you can't exist.

Things changed thanks to the internet and Gay Rights movement. I found others like me. In my fifties, I got support from a therapist at Fenway Community Health Center to help overcome years of oppression and fear. I came out of hiding, and like others, was subjected to harassment and derision. But you keep your focus on making things better; since coming out I work with others to help change things. But the impact is there nonetheless. Last year I earned less than 20K. And this year began with Share closing it's doors. Being unemployed is tough for anyone, but when you're transgender, the cards are stacked even higher against you.

As a Commonwealth we stand for certain things. Until we all have the same legal rights and protections as everyone else, we are failing in one of our most important precepts: equality under the law.

Please support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764) and help set things on the right path. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Laurie Wolfe
18 Royal St.
Watertown, MA 02472

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
State House Room 416B
Boston, MA 02133

COUNSEL

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

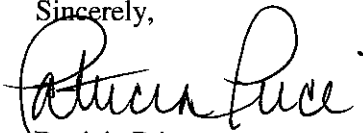
I live in Massachusetts, and I work with a transgender person. I am writing to ask you to support "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights." This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, lending, housing, education, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It also adds gender identity and expression to the hate crimes statute, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people. It is important to me that all of my co-workers have the same access to employment and opportunities that I do.

I believe this bill is important because transgender people and others whose gender does not conform to rigid stereotypes are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, transgender people are routinely fired by their employers either before or after transitioning from one sex to another; many others remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility and misunderstanding about transgender people. Employment is one of the key areas in which transgender and gender non-conforming people are vulnerable to discrimination, making it hard for them to make a living. I do not want to see this happen to my co-worker.

This legislation is vital to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Transgender people face discrimination in many aspects of their lives. The Massachusetts legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message – passing this bill makes it clear that Massachusetts values all of its residents, and protects all of them equally against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this bill, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for Massachusetts to join the 13 other states and dozens of municipalities that already protect their citizens on this basis, and once again take its rightful place as a leader in the struggle for equality for all people.

Sincerely,



Patricia Price

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
State House Room 416B
Boston, MA 02133

counsel

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

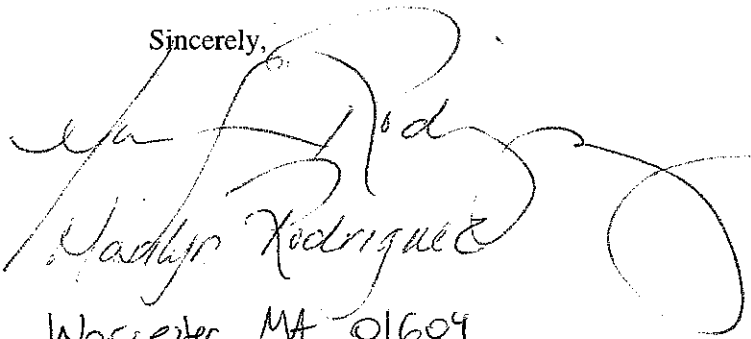
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I believe this bill is important because transgender people and others whose gender does not conform to rigid stereotypes are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, transgender people are routinely fired by their employers either before or after transitioning from one sex to another; many others remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility and misunderstanding about transgender people. Employment is one of the key areas in which transgender and gender non-conforming people are vulnerable to discrimination, making it hard for them to make a living. I do not want to see this happen to my co-worker.

This legislation is vital to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Transgender people face discrimination in many aspects of their lives. The Massachusetts legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message – passing this bill makes it clear that Massachusetts values all of its residents, and protects all of them equally against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this bill, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for Massachusetts to join the 13 other states and dozens of municipalities that already protect their citizens on this basis, and once again take its rightful place as a leader in the struggle for equality for all people.

Sincerely,



Nadyn Rodriguez
Worcester, MA, 01609

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
State House Room 416B
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

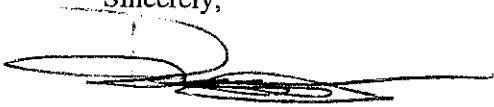
I live in Massachusetts, and I work with a transgender person. I am writing to ask you to support "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights." This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, lending, housing, education, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It also adds gender identity and expression to the hate crimes statute, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people. It is important to me that all of my co-workers have the same access to employment and opportunities that I do.

I believe this bill is important because transgender people and others whose gender does not conform to rigid stereotypes are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, transgender people are routinely fired by their employers either before or after transitioning from one sex to another; many others remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility and misunderstanding about transgender people. Employment is one of the key areas in which transgender and gender non-conforming people are vulnerable to discrimination, making it hard for them to make a living. I do not want to see this happen to my co-worker.

This legislation is vital to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Transgender people face discrimination in many aspects of their lives. The Massachusetts legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message – passing this bill makes it clear that Massachusetts values all of its residents, and protects all of them equally against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this bill, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for Massachusetts to join the 13 other states and dozens of municipalities that already protect their citizens on this basis, and once again take its rightful place as a leader in the struggle for equality for all people.

Sincerely,



Priscila Rodriguez

Worcester, MA 01604

Counsel

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
State House Room 416B
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I live in Massachusetts, and I work with a transgender person. I am writing to ask you to support "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights." This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, lending, housing, education, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It also adds gender identity and expression to the hate crimes statute, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people. It is important to me that all of my co-workers have the same access to employment and opportunities that I do.

I believe this bill is important because transgender people and others whose gender does not conform to rigid stereotypes are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, transgender people are routinely fired by their employers either before or after transitioning from one sex to another; many others remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility and misunderstanding about transgender people. Employment is one of the key areas in which transgender and gender non-conforming people are vulnerable to discrimination, making it hard for them to make a living. I do not want to see this happen to my co-worker.

This legislation is vital to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Transgender people face discrimination in many aspects of their lives. The Massachusetts legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message – passing this bill makes it clear that Massachusetts values all of its residents, and protects all of them equally against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this bill, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for Massachusetts to join the 13 other states and dozens of municipalities that already protect their citizens on this basis, and once again take its rightful place as a leader in the struggle for equality for all people.

Sincerely,

Linford Cunningham
Linford Cunningham
Worcester MA 01605

May 13th, 2011



Counsel

FELIX G. ARROYO
BOSTON CITY COUNCILOR
AT-LARGE

May 15, 2011

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764). This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It also adds "gender identity or expression" to existing hate crime statutes, reflecting the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people.

This bill is important because transgender people throughout the Commonwealth are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, Bay State employers routinely fire transgender people either before or after transitioning their gender, while many other transgender people in the state remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility, and misunderstanding about who they are. The difficulties that our transgender citizens face in the workplace also often lead to harassment and unfair treatment in public accommodations, housing, and credit transactions as well.

The City of Boston has been a leader in transgender equality for some time, passing similar legislation in 2002. I am proud to also have led the passage of a Boston City Council Resolution in support of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights." Many businesses in the City of Boston and throughout the Commonwealth, including Bank of America, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, John Hancock Financial Services, and Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, already provide equality for their transgender employees. Nationally, states and municipalities recognize the importance of ensuring full equality for their transgender citizens—thirteen states, Washington, D.C., and 133 cities already provide similar legal protections as those existing in "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights." It is time once again for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to take its rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

I urge you to support this legislation which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Felix G. Arroyo
Boston City Council At-Large

BOSTON CITY HALL, ONE CITY HALL SQUARE, BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS, 02201
617-635-4205 FAX: 617-635-4203 Felix.Arroyo@cityofboston.gov

May 14, 2011

Senator Cynthia Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Room 405
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

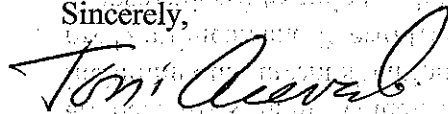
Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
Room 136
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Creem and Representative O'Flaherty:

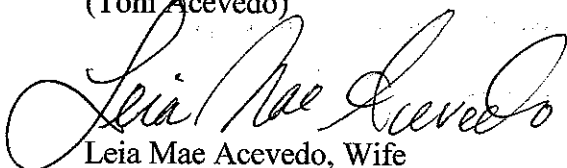
My name is Angelica Acevedo, MSW, LICSW, married to my wife, Leia M. Acevedo, residing in 3105 Harvest Drive, North Andover, MA 01845 with two dogs. We are hard working individuals and couple who care about human rights for all people including our current situation. I, Angelica, prefer my name as Toni Acevedo, came out to my Dominican and Puerto Rican family 9 years ago, and now will be coming out again as Transgendered Female to Male. I am proud to say through the work with clients as their individual mental health therapist using clinical social work skills, I have admitted to myself my identity as transgendered something I have known all of my life but didn't have the words or the term.

There is still more work needed to have this world equal for all, for now I would like you to strongly consider to PASS the "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" to assist people like me who are transgendered and so that we won't lose housing, jobs or become physically harmed in any work environment. This bill will help me and other people like myself feel more comfortable in all settings (at least) for one moment in time, to obtain the equal rights we all take for granted. PLEASE PASS THIS BILL. I will also be involved through NASW as Leadership Committee member for the North Shore area. You will be hearing from myself and my wife in the near future.

Sincerely,



Angelica Acevedo, MSW, LICSW
(Toni Acevedo)



Leia Mae Acevedo, Wife

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
State House Room 416B
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I live in Massachusetts, and I work with a transgender person. I am writing to ask you to support "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights." This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, lending, housing, education, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It also adds gender identity and expression to the hate crimes statute, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people. It is important to me that all of my co-workers have the same access to employment and opportunities that I do.

I believe this bill is important because transgender people and others whose gender does not conform to rigid stereotypes are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, transgender people are routinely fired by their employers either before or after transitioning from one sex to another; many others remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility and misunderstanding about transgender people. Employment is one of the key areas in which transgender and gender non-conforming people are vulnerable to discrimination, making it hard for them to make a living. I do not want to see this happen to my co-worker.

This legislation is vital to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Transgender people face discrimination in many aspects of their lives. The Massachusetts legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message – passing this bill makes it clear that Massachusetts values all of its residents, and protects all of them equally against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this bill, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for Massachusetts to join the 13 other states and dozens of municipalities that already protect their citizens on this basis, and once again take its rightful place as a leader in the struggle for equality for all people.

Sincerely,

Joan Anderson MA / LADC
AIDS Project Work.

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
State House Room 416B
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to ask you to support "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights." This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, lending, housing, education, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It also adds gender identity and expression to the hate crimes statute, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people. I live in Massachusetts, and I support this bill because I have a friend who is transgender. It is important to me to know that all of my friends are protected equally under the law, no matter who they are.

I believe this bill is important because transgender people and others whose gender does not conform to rigid stereotypes are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, transgender people are routinely fired by their employers either before or after transitioning from one sex to another; many others remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility and misunderstanding about transgender people. Widespread prejudices about how "real men" or "real women" should look or act often lead to harassment and unfair treatment in public accommodations, housing, and credit transactions.

This legislation is vital to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Transgender people face discrimination in many aspects of their lives. The Massachusetts legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message – passing this bill makes it clear that Massachusetts values all of its residents, and protects all of them equally against discrimination and violence. I don't want to see my friend marginalized and excluded any more.

I urge you to support this bill, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for Massachusetts to join the 13 other states and dozens of municipalities that already protect their citizens on this basis, and once again take its rightful place as a leader in the struggle for equality for all people.

Sincerely,

Annie Paquette
Annie Paquette

39 Priscilla Road
South Easton, MA 02375
May 14, 2011

Counsel

Representative Eugene L. O'Leary
State House
Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Representative O'Leary,

Please accept this letter regarding "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights". I am requesting your active support for this essential bill.

I am a resident of Easton, MA, where I am a fourth grade special education teacher, and my family has lived for 26 years. I am the mother of four wonderful adult children. My second oldest is transgender.

As a young mother, I had hoped and dreamed for my children to be happy and healthy and fulfilled. Now, I pray for them to be safe, respected, and treated fairly. I am not asking for anything special or unusual. In fact, quite the contrary is true. I am only asking for my children and family to receive the same protection by law that all children and families deserve.

My husband and I have been members of a support group for parents of transgender and gender variant children for almost three years. We have grown from a small group of three families to our current group of over twenty families. Each family is as unique as each child, but we share some commonalities: we love all our children unconditionally, and we demand equality for all our children. As a parent, one of my greatest concerns is for my children's safety. In particular, my transgender child's safety is of grave concern. I know that thankfully our current societal environment is becoming more accepting. However, I also know that civil rights are not protected based on gender identity and expression. While we cannot legislate respect, we can legislate equality. The transgender community is at risk for harassment, bullying and violence. However, there is no explicit protection under the law based on gender identity and expression. The indignities, harassment, job discrimination and bullying my child has endured are intolerable.

Recently I chaperoned the BAGLY prom, and thought about the many kids there who need and deserve our protection. We have the opportunity to send the message that ALL citizens are protected under the law, regardless of their gender identity and expression. We have the opportunity to tell these kids that they are valuable, and we will protect them.

My goal is simple: to work to ensure the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights". Your support is of great importance. Please consider the value of each individual, including my transgender child, and support this bill.

Sincerely,

Dianne E. Monnin
Dianne E. Monnin

39 Priscilla Road

South Easton, MA 02375

teachkids427@hotmail.com

508-238-3297



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
ASSOCIATION OF CONGREGATIONS

May 16, 2011

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House, Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Dear Representative O'Flaherty,

I'm writing to you today to testify in support of An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights and urge you to help pass this important bill.

I am one of a very fortunate few. Until I was hired at the Unitarian Universalist Association in Boston last October, I never thought I would be able to be my full, authentic self at my place of employment. It is deeply fulfilling to be working in the service of my faith in my new job, but it's even more fulfilling to have my identity as a transgender person not only tolerated but valued by my colleagues.


Unlike the large majority of my transgender siblings in Massachusetts, I live without fear of harassment and discrimination in my job. My daily gratitude for this is sharpened by the fact that trans people in Massachusetts have no recourse under state law if we are discriminated against due to our gender identity or expression.

And trans folks experience incredible discrimination—a recent report from the National Center for Transgender Equality and the Gay and Lesbian Task Force surveyed 6,450 trans people and found that 63% had experienced a serious act of discrimination that majorly impacted their life, and 23% had experienced a "catastrophic" level of discrimination. As just one example, 26% had lost a job and 50% were harassed on the job for being trans or gender non-conforming.*

There isn't a single trans friend of mine who isn't affected by the lack of tolerance and understanding of trans and gender variant individuals by the majority. For so many of us, the smallest things that most people take for granted are a struggle: getting competent health care, finding safe housing, even feeling comfortable and safe in public bathrooms.

As a trans person myself and as a person of faith, I'm asking you to do the right thing and help pass An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights. With the passing of this bill, Massachusetts can take a vital step forward in ensuring that trans people in this state can live healthy, productive lives, free of fear.

Sincerely,


Alex Kapitan

LGBT Ministries
Multicultural Growth & Witness

Unitarian Universalist Association
25 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02108

* Grant, Mottet, Tanis, Harrison, Herman, & Keisling. (2011). *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. Washington: National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

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Counsel

Yohah Ralph
19 Walnut St.
Northampton, MA 01060

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405 Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136 Boston, MA 02133
Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee: I am writing to ask you to support the passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764). This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It adds 'gender identity or expression' to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.

This bill is important to me because as a transgender person, I have faced many forms of discrimination both socially and in the realm of employment. I believe that passing this bill will help to educate and socially advance the human rights and quality of life for transgender people in the state of Massachusetts, and that this significant step will radiate with hope for transgender people in other places in the United States and the world. For any individual to be denied basic opportunities such as employment because of discrimination is to foster dysfunctional ways of survival in the world, ultimately putting all people at risk, and stunts the wealth of human potential each person has to contribute to society.

Transgender people throughout the Commonwealth are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. Hate crimes occur because the perpetrator's perception is that someone is less than human. Please endorse the full humanity of transgender people. Our unique characteristics are little different than any other person who is born into a body with a particular skin color, gender, medical condition, or any other trait.

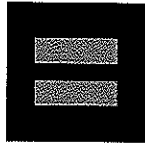
This legislation is vital to our community. This bill makes it clear that we value our transgender residents and will protect them against discrimination and violence. I urge you to support this legislation, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to join 13 other jurisdictions, including Washington D.C., and the hundreds of municipalities, including Boston, Cambridge, Northampton, and Amherst, that already protect their transgender residents in this country, and once again take its rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

Sincerely,


Yohah Ralph

"All I'm saying is simply this, that all life is interrelated, that somehow we're caught in an inescapable network of mutuality tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. For some strange reason, I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. You can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be."

Martin Luther King



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN®

Counsel

Written Testimony of Joe Solmonese, President of the Human Rights Campaign, in Support of
House Bill 502: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights

to

The Massachusetts Joint Committee on the Judiciary

May 4, 2011

Dear Members of the Committee:

My name is Joe Solmonese, and I am the President of the Human Rights Campaign, America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) equality. By inspiring and engaging all Americans, HRC strives to end discrimination against LGBT citizens and realize a nation that achieves fundamental fairness and equality for all. On behalf of our over 750,000 members and supporters nationwide, including more than 40,000 in Massachusetts, I am honored to submit this statement in support of HB 502, An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity and expression.

Massachusetts has a proud history of extending protections for minorities and being a leader on civil rights. The people of the Bay State are known for valuing liberty and a respect for privacy. Anti-discrimination laws put those values into practice. They send a strong message that all of Massachusetts's residents matter. Today it is time to protect the most vulnerable among us by extending civil rights protections to cover gender identity and expression.

Discrimination against transgender and gender non-conforming individuals continues to be a very real problem. As part of my role at HRC, I travel the country speaking to members of the LGBT community. I have heard far too many stories of transgender people who have lost their livelihoods simply because of some combination of an employer's fear, ignorance and bigotry. Some are of highly skilled professionals who, though seemingly irreplaceable in their positions, suddenly become expendable when they announce the intent to live as the people they truly are. Others are accounts of people forced into whatever jobs they can find, scraping together money for the tremendous medical costs of gender transition, which are rarely, if ever, covered by health insurance. They are stories of people in every walk of life – doctors and lawyers, plumbers and bus drivers. Many are also stories of parents and spouses, whose efforts to find secure, fulfilling employment are also a struggle to provide for their families. The time has long since passed when we as a nation ought to tolerate arbitrary discrimination against any group of people. I cannot understate the real-life implications for Massachusetts's residents. That any hardworking transgender Massachusetts's resident should be denied the ability to contribute to the economy and support his or her family is simply unacceptable.

WORKING FOR LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER EQUAL RIGHTS

1640 Rhode Island Avenue Washington, D.C. 20036

phone (202) 628 4160 fax (202) 216 1505 e-mail events@hrc.org

In addition to guaranteeing a level playing field in employment, House Bill 502 would ensure that housing opportunities are made available to all, students are free from discrimination in schools, and no one has to forego entering a public establishment based solely on who they are. It is well-documented that transgender and gender non-conforming individuals are shown less desirable properties for purchase or rent, are excluded from schools activities, receive less favorable customer service, or encounter outright refusal of service. This bill does not prevent employers from firing incompetent employees and does not prevent landlords from turning down unqualified renters. Instead, this bill simply makes sure that all employees get a fair chance at working hard to get ahead without discrimination or bias and that no one is singled out for arbitrary discrimination when it comes to areas like housing, education, public accommodations, and access to credit.

HB 502 will bring Massachusetts law further in line with the federal *Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2010*. The need for inclusion of gender identity in state hate crimes laws remains strong. Transgender individuals are disproportionately affected by violent, bias-motivated crime. These crimes are among the most violent and brutal, often resulting in the death of the victim. Adding gender identity to the Massachusetts law will close the gap on crimes lacking a federal nexus, as well as property crimes.

Passing HB 502 will once again make Massachusetts a leader in civil rights, but Massachusetts would not be alone. Beginning with an ordinance passed in Minneapolis in 1975, 12 states, the District of Columbia, and more than 135 cities and counties have enacted laws prohibiting discrimination based on gender identity. More than 500 private businesses across the United States, including 42% of Fortune 500 companies and 69% of Fortune 100 companies, have voluntarily adopted policies that prohibit employment discrimination based on gender identity. Addressing discrimination on the basis of gender identity is not new for Massachusetts. In 1997, the City of Cambridge added gender identity to its local non-discrimination ordinance, followed in subsequent years by Boston and North Hampton.

The time has come for Massachusetts to finally act and ensure that discrimination has no place in this great commonwealth. Please vote in favor of House Bill 502.

Joe Solmonese
President, Human Rights Campaign
1640 Rhode Island Ave N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
202- 628-4160

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 405
Boston, MA 02133

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
Joint Committee on the Judiciary
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Re: An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing today to strongly recommend passage of "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" (H.502/S.764). This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, housing, education, credit lending, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It adds 'gender identity or expression' to existing hate crimes statutes, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender people.

This bill is important to me primarily because I have friends, coworkers, and family members who identify as transgender and who deserve the same basic rights and privileges all of us enjoy and quite frankly don't put much thought to. In the wake of a recent beating of a transgender woman at a Baltimore McDonalds, I would like to think that would not happen to a trans person in Massachusetts, but after doing research and reading, I'm not so sure transgender people are safe in our state. This bill is also important to me professionally, as over the span of my 10 years working in human services, I have met at least twenty transgender people in various states of crisis, usually with the stressors and strains which this bill would prevent, frequently including being fired from a job or terminated from housing due to discrimination based on gender identity and expression. As with straight people who experience unjust firings and loss of other basic needs, coupled with financial strain, many wind up looking to the state for the long and expensive process of psychiatric treatment and transitional assistance, making the passage of this Act a fiscally responsible move as well as a compassionate one.

One argument which I would like to address is that of the "bathroom bill" opposition, who make reference to the concern that transgender people using the public restroom based on one's gender expression and not necessarily one's biological gender assignment. As a mother of a young child, I can assure you all that in my humble opinion, this concern is not based in fact. I personally have never been upset or concerned by someone of the "wrong" gender being in the ladies room with us, and I do not feel that having transgender women using the women's room changes anything about gauging the safety of a public bathroom. Also, I know that some who oppose this bill feel that transgender rights are a set of special interests for one group. I feel that this is in direct conflict with the basic protected rights of all residents of the Commonwealth and that passing this legislation would instead bring a forgotten group to the table as an equal partner in rights and protections.

Despite widespread support by Massachusetts residents from all walks of life, this bill has somehow failed to make it out of committee in past General Courts. The Massachusetts Legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message by passing "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights" Bill. This bill makes it clear that we value our transgender residents and will protect them against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this legislation, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to join 13 other jurisdictions, including Washington D.C., and the hundreds of municipalities,

including Boston, Cambridge, Northampton, and Amherst, that already protect their transgender residents in this country, and once again take its rightful place as a beacon of liberty, justice and equality for all people.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Hannon MS, LSW

8 Village Hill Lane #1

Natick, MA 01760

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Charlotte Hannon', with a long, wavy horizontal line extending to the right.

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
State House Room 416B
Boston, MA 02133

Counsel

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Senator Creem, Representative O'Flaherty, and Members of the Committee:

I live in Massachusetts, and I work with a transgender person. I am writing to ask you to support "An Act Relative to Transgender Equal Rights." This proposed law would prohibit discrimination in employment, lending, housing, education, and public accommodations on the basis of a person's gender identity or expression. It also adds gender identity and expression to the hate crimes statute, which reflects the heightened level of violence experienced by transgender and gender non-conforming people. It is important to me that all of my co-workers have the same access to employment and opportunities that I do.

I believe this bill is important because transgender people and others whose gender does not conform to rigid stereotypes are often harmed by harassment, discrimination, and violence. For example, transgender people are routinely fired by their employers either before or after transitioning from one sex to another; many others remain unemployed or underemployed as a result of discrimination, hostility and misunderstanding about transgender people. Employment is one of the key areas in which transgender and gender non-conforming people are vulnerable to discrimination, making it hard for them to make a living. I do not want to see this happen to my co-worker.

This legislation is vital to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Transgender people face discrimination in many aspects of their lives. The Massachusetts legislature has a chance this year to send a very different message – passing this bill makes it clear that Massachusetts values all of its residents, and protects all of them equally against discrimination and violence.

I urge you to support this bill, which represents an important step towards equality for all citizens of the Commonwealth. It is time for Massachusetts to join the 13 other states and dozens of municipalities that already protect their citizens on this basis, and once again take its rightful place as a leader in the struggle for equality for all people.

Sincerely,

Law Kiper

Senator Cynthia Stone Creem
State House Room 416B
Boston, MA 02133

Comment

Representative Eugene L. O'Flaherty
State House Room 136
Boston, MA 02133

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Sincerely,

Ellidmark Doris, Widmark Doris
AIDS Project Worcester
Case Manager
Worcester, MA
01604