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August 5, 2009

## **Out & Equal Workplace Advocates applauds the introduction of an inclusive ENDA**

Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR), joined by Senators Susan Collins (R-ME), Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME), introduced today the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) in an important show of bipartisan support. This bill, which would extend the existing federal law prohibiting employment discrimination to protect people on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, is much needed and long overdue.

Out & Equal Workplace Advocates applauds the bill's introduction. Out & Equal Executive Director Selisse Berry said, "This is very welcome news. Out & Equal has worked tirelessly for more than a decade to assure that the nation's leading corporations provide policies and protections for its LGBT employees in the absence of federal protections. The federal government is now poised to do what major corporations have been doing for years -- protecting employees from discrimination."

While this bill has a good chance of passing, your help is needed. It is essential that you contact your Senators and urge them to support this bill and ask them to become a co-sponsor. Becoming a co-sponsor shows other members of Congress that your Senator will stand in solidarity with our community, which helps build momentum for the bill's passage.

President Obama has said that he is ready to sign this bill. All we need now is for the Senate to act.

"We all know that not every workplace is an out and equal workplace, and not everyone feels comfortable coming out at work, and there's a reason for that -- a lack of legal protections," says Berry. "We are all hoping that a fully inclusive ENDA will soon be signed into law, providing the essential legal framework that will protect all of us. Here's how you can help."

Take action now: Email your Senators and ask them to be a co-sponsor of ENDA  
[http://eqfed.org/campaign/endainroduction\\_senate](http://eqfed.org/campaign/endainroduction_senate)

Press contact: Erik Olvera, 415-694-6512 or [eolvera@outandequal.org](mailto:eolvera@outandequal.org)