

TRANSADVOCATE

It's Put Up Or Shut Up Time

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Abstract

According to the Washington Blade: "House Democratic leaders are strongly considering dropping anti-discrimination protections for transgender persons from the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, or ENDA, after an internal Democratic head count on Wednesday found that the bill would likely be defeated if it included the trans provision, multiple sources familiar with the bill said. " In [...]

Article

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In May of this year I reported of the whispers in the halls of Congress to drop transgender people from the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. Some went as far to claim that I was causing undue fear, that my information was wrong. I have very high standards when running a story here at Transadvocate. I have very well placed sources and I fact check my stories many times over. It appears that the information that I obtained was correct.

I said:

It's coming up on two years ago that I wrote an "Open Letter to Cheryl Jacques." A month after I posted my open letter, Jacques greeted transgender protesters outside of Human Rights Campaign's (HRC) offices with the news that HRC would not support any version of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act that didn't include transgender protections.

Last Friday I asked whether or not we are one community. I've been told more than once that a GLB"T" community just isn't a reality.

The Southern Comfort Conference is the largest transgender conference in the United States. The gathering draws some of the most wealthy donors in the transgender community. For the first time ever, Joe Solmonese addressed the conference. Autumn Sandeen described Joe Solmonese's speech this way:

"Joe Solmonese spoke to almost 900 transpeople, their significant others, friends, families, and allies about ENDA and the Matthew Sheppard Act. He was very clear about the HRC's current feelings on transgender inclusion in those pieces of legislation. Two thoughts that struck me: 1.)

Mr. Solmonese didn't seem to express any HRC reticence on inclusion -- it didn't sound as if he currently believed that transfolk "trans-jacked" ENDA or the Matthew Sheppard Act."

On the back of the SCC program it has this picture:

It reads:

I Am HRC

The Human Rights Campaign and its grassroots force of 700,000 members and supporters are working every day to achieve our vision of a fair and equal country. By working with Americans of all race, classes and backgrounds, we are committed to improving the lives of all gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.

The Human Rights Campaign salutes the 2007 Southern Comfort Conference!

Joe Solmonese thanked Mara Keisling of The National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) for the work she's done. Mara's received much of the credit for the progress that the transgender community has accomplished. If transgender people are written out of ENDA or the Matthew Shepard Act, I really have to call into question what push NCTE has. How far have we come?

I'll ask again. are we one community? If we are removed from either the Matthew Shepard Act or ENDA and HRC does not lobby AGAINST PASSAGE of either bill without inclusion, we are not one community. HRC, NCTE, and others have acted, signaled, and said we are one. Now is crunch time. Am I really HRC? We shall see.

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