

The T Isn't Silent, But HRC Is

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Abstract

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. [...]

Article

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. She later wrote:

"passing ENDA without gender identity and expression is like passing a copyright law that covers books and television shows but doesn't cover digital music or videos. But ENDA is about people's lives, not MP3s or DVDs. That's why it's so important that we have the strongest and most comprehensive bill possible."

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. Maybe I've just been spoiled by living in Indianapolis (I never thought I'd ever utter those words), but our community has been strongly united. During the battle for the Human Rights Ordinance there was NEVER any serious talk of removing gender identity from the list of those protected.

Why do I bring this up again? Another voice is calling for the removal of gender identity from the Senate version of the hate crimes bill. And according to anonymous sources, HRC is flatly refusing to ONLY support a hate crimes bill that has gender inclusive language.

The transgender lobbyists I spoke to on the Hill on Wednesday said that they are being told by Senate offices that the ENDA bill in the Senate will NOT include gender identity.

Even more worrisome is the chatter among many of the other leading GLBT organizations that gender identity will be removed from the hate crimes bill that is currently in committee in the Senate.

Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF), and the National Organization for Women (NOW) have stated publicly that they will only support legislation that is trans-inclusive. So again I ask, are we unified in this fight for GLBT Americans? It's a good question to ask, and has been asked many times this week. Unfortunately, HRC

isn't talking.

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