

What NCTE Doesn't Say

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Abstract

I recently recieved an email alert from NCTE about a fully inclusive ENDA. Mara Keisling said:

Dear Friends,

I have no doubt we can pass a transgender-inclusive ENDA next year if we all do the work now to educate Congress and the public. In a recent interview Rep Barney Frank (D-MA) agreed saying:

"The more Democrats we have, and obviously, not every Democrat votes with us, the better we'll do. If we can pick up 15 Democratic seats, then I think we are in good position to pass a transgender-inclusive ENDA." (<http://www.365gay.com/features/interview-with-barney-frank>)

Of course he's right, not every Democrat votes with us and not every Republican votes against us. That's why the best work we can be doing now to get us in position for winning our rights in 2009 is the work of building relationships and educating all of our lawmakers - whoever they are, where ever they are.

When I'm visiting lawmakers on Capitol Hill one thing I hear far too often is that lawmakers don't think they have transgender people in their districts. You and I know that is impossible - we are every where. I can visit your representatives everyday up on the Hill, but they really need to hear from you and to meet you face to face.

Article

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As Paul Harvey says, "and now, for the rest of the story." Barney said in a video interview with Towleroad blog:

"If we pick up 15 or 20 Democrats, most of them will be supportive. But I am disappointed in the transgender community. They seem to think that if Nancy Pelosi and myself, George Miller and a few others waved a magic wand we could deliver it. Look, this past year in the legislatures of Maryland, Massachusetts, and New York, efforts to add transgender protections...were defeated. And I testified for it in Massachusetts and lobbied for it. And as a political problem out there, I wish there weren't, but pretending that something doesn't exist is never a good way to deal with it. I am afraid that too many people in the transgender community think that talking to me and Nancy Pelosi is the way to do it. I don't yet see enough grassroots lobbying on their part.

"I do think that the hearing that we had -- and by the way, we had a hearing in the House over the objections of many of the transgender leadership. But I really doubt their political wisdom...Because they said it was part of our deal to separate it from ENDA and they wanted to not have anything separate. We did a good job in that hearing and we helped persuade some people. So we're making progress. We'd make even more progress if the transgender community was willing to do the hard political work. And not, frankly, think they can just talk a few leaders into handing this to them."

And that, my friends, is the REST of the story! Good day!

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