



Ethical Action Report



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In this issue:

GLBT Equality: Ask Congress to Support the Employment Non-Discrimination Act

Educate Our Children: Support the Education for All Fast Track Initiative

Civil Rights: Support a Ban on Touch-Screen Voting Machines

Reproductive Freedom: Sign the Planned Parenthood Pledge

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GLBT Equality: Ask Congress to Support the Employment Non-Discrimination Act

There currently are no federal protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity in hiring or firing practices. Moreover, in most states it's legal to fire someone based on sexual orientation or their gender identity. This leaves countless hardworking Americans at risk of losing their jobs or being denied employment for reasons that have nothing to do with their abilities or performance. Federal law *does* provide legal protections against employment discrimination based on race, gender, religion, national origin, and disability; it's time to enshrine the same protections for sexual orientation and gender identity.

BACKGROUND

The Employment Non-Discrimination Act is a federal bill that would make it illegal to fire, refuse to hire, or deny promotion to employees based on sexual orientation or gender identity. This bill is desperately needed to ensure that all Americans are protected against discrimination, that fairness remains the rule in the workplace, and that employment decisions remain based upon ability and performance.

ACTION

Please call your Congresspeople and demand they stand up for fairness in the workplace by supporting the Employment Non-Discrimination Act.

Educate Our Children: Support the Education for All Fast Track Initiative

In 2002 the Education for All Fast Track Initiative was created to aid the nearly 100 million children across the globe who are not in school, so they can get a primary education. The initiative has proven to be very effective in providing resources to poor nations for building and implementing education plans. Despite these successes, the United States needs to do more.

BACKGROUND

The Fast Track Initiative was created to help poor countries close gaps in finance, policy, capacity, and data. The Education for All is a global compact on education, and it aims to assist poor countries in providing universal primary education to their children by 2015. Donor countries supply resources—both financial and informational—to developing countries that create and apply education plans.

Though the U.S. supports the EFA, its contribution for global education is less than one-third of the United Kingdom's, despite the fact that the U.S. economy is three times greater. We can and should do more. All children should have access to education; it's the foundation of a strong and healthy world.

ACTION

Call your members of Congress and urge them to provide increased financial support for the Education for All Fast Track Initiative so that all children will have access to at least a basic education.

Civil Rights: Support a Ban on Touch-Screen Voting Machines

Tens of millions of Americans use paperless touch-screen voting machines in elections, which cause routine problems and can effectively disenfranchise voters without any means of detection or recourse. These voting machines must be banned to ensure the strength our democracy.

BACKGROUND

Paperless touch-screen voting machines caused numerous problems in 2006. In Williamson County, Texas, some votes were counted three times. In Pennsylvania several accounts of “vote flipping,” the tallying of a wrong vote, were recorded. And in Sarasota county, Florida, more than 18,000 votes were lost in the congressional elections.

These machines are being used increasingly across the country and may be used in the presidential elections in 2008 unless something is done now. Congressman Rush Holt (D-NJ) has introduced a bill, H.R. 811, which would rectify this situation by banning paperless touch-screen voting machines, thereby protecting the vote of every American.

ACTION

Call your Congressperson and ask her or him to support Congressman Holt’s legislation. Let your representative know that you won’t tolerate voting machines that disenfranchise voters.

Reproductive Freedom: Sign the Planned Parenthood Pledge

On April 18 the Supreme Court upheld a controversial law that bans a mid-term abortion procedure, and in doing so chipped away at basic protections enshrined in *Roe v. Wade*. The landscape of reproductive freedom in the United States has been drastically altered and we must take action now to reclaim our rights.

BACKGROUND

The 2003 law outlaws a procedure known as dilation and extraction, which is used in fewer than 1 percent of all abortions. In many cases it’s the safest option for women and carries a reduced risk of infertility. However, the 2003 ban doesn’t allow an exception for the health of the woman, despite the fact that a “health exception” has survived decades of legal scrutiny. Now a woman will only be allowed the procedure if her life is in danger.

This ban puts women’s health and safety at risk and politicizes a personal decision that should remain between a patient and doctor. No woman should have to be at death’s door before a safer procedure is granted to her, and no doctor should be put in the position of having to balance their pledge to provide the best care for their patients with the fear of being prosecuted under federal law.

ACTION

Sign the Planned Parenthood Pledge at http://www.ppaction.org/campaign/plannedparenthood_pledge/. Send politicians a clear message: Protect reproductive rights.

Contacting Elected Officials

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