



About Gender Rights Maryland

The purpose of Gender Rights Maryland is to promote civil rights, education, tolerance, equality and acceptance on the basis of sex and gender identity/expression in the State of Maryland.

Gender Rights Maryland's initial legislative goal is to see the passage of a comprehensive gender identity anti-discrimination bill by the end of the 2012 legislative session.

Talking Points

- In the state of Maryland, outside of Baltimore City and Montgomery County, gender non-conforming people are not protected by law from discrimination; most people have no idea that this is true, believing that such protections already exist
- Gender Identity antidiscrimination is about basic human rights - the right to a job, a place to live, and fair treatment in public spaces.
- Gender Dysphoria is a recognized and treatable medical condition; it is not a lifestyle choice.
- Gender Identity concerns are not a "gay" issue. It is about who you are, not whom you like.
- Gender Identity protections are a mainstream issue – In recent polling, 63% of Marylanders support adding comprehensive protections.
- Gender Identity protections are the law in 15 states, the District of Columbia, and over 140 municipalities including Baltimore City and Montgomery County, covering 43% of Americans. We are seeking those protections to be extended to all Marylanders.
- A recent study of transpeople by the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) reported that 90% of those surveyed reported harassment, mistreatment or discrimination at work. 47% indicated they had been fired, not hired or denied a promotion as a result of being transgender or gender non-conforming. 53% reported being verbally harassed or disrespected in a place of public accommodation, including hotels,

restaurants, buses, airports and government agencies. And when added to existing structural racism, the numbers are far more alarming for people of color.

Resources to Consult:

Injustice at Every Turn – A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey
http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/reports/ntds_summary.pdf

Survey | Strong Majorities of Americans Favor Rights and Legal Protections for Transgender People
<http://publicreligion.org/research/2011/11/american-attitudes-towards-transgender-people/>

Regarding Opposition

The “bathroom” issue

In all jurisdictions that have gender identity protections there has never been a case prosecuted where a lawbreaker has used gender identity concerns as a defense for their behavior. It does not happen. If anything, transpeople fear for their own safety in the public bathroom, as well evidenced by events of this past year in Maryland. We believe those who perpetrate crimes should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law. Gender Identity protections do not offer a free pass for perpetrators of crime.

Resources to Consult:

Jurisdictions with Explicitly Transgender-Inclusive Nondiscrimination Law
http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/fact_sheets/all_jurisdictions_w_pop_10_11.pdf

Scope of Explicitly Transgender-Inclusive Anti-Discrimination Laws
http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/fact_sheets/TI_antidisc_laws_7_08.pdf

The “DSM” Issue

Homosexuality was included in the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) until 1974. Today we all know that being gay is not a mental disorder. Gender Identity is on the same path. In the forthcoming DSM-5, to be approved next May and published in 2013, the term “disorder” has been dropped with respect to Gender Identity. In September, 2011, the World Professional

Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) issued a revision to the Standards of Care which is the primary document used by health professionals for the treatment of Gender Identity issues. The new document fundamentally changes the thinking on the treatment of Gender Identity.

From the WPATH press release on the revised standards of care:

“More than any other version, 2011 revisions also recognize that gender nonconformity in and of itself is not a disorder and that many people live comfortable lives without having to seek therapy or medical interventions for gender confusion or unhappiness.”

Resources to consult:

WPATH

<http://www.wpath.org/>

The Top 10 Things Trans People Should Know About the New Standards of Care

<http://transgenderequality.wordpress.com/2011/09/26/the-top-10-things-trans-people-should-know-about-the-new-standards-of-care/>

Revisions to the DSM

<http://www.dsm5.org/proposedrevision/pages/proposedrevision.aspx?rid=482#>