

800 Scott Street  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72202  
November 9, 2009

Senator Blanche Lincoln  
355 Dirksen Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510-0404

Senator Lincoln,

We, the Center for Artistic Revolution, the NWA Center for Equality, and Stonewall Democratic Caucus of Arkansas, are writing you in support of the Employee Non-Discrimination Act (S. 1584, commonly known as ENDA). ENDA was introduced in the 111th Congress by Representatives Barney Frank (D-MA) and Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL) in the House. The bill was introduced in the Senate by Senators Jeff Merkley (D-OR) and Susan Collins (R-ME). If passed, ENDA would provide basic protections against workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.

As Senator Harkin stated when he opened the Health Education Labor and Pension Committee on the morning of November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2009, "Over the last 45 years, we have made great strides towards eliminating discrimination in the workplace. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination on the basis of race, sex, national origin and religion. The Age Discrimination in Employment Act, in 1967, prohibited discrimination on the basis of age. The Americans with Disabilities Act, in 1990, prohibited discrimination on the basis of disability. It is time, at long last, for us to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity as well. Such discrimination is wrong and cannot be tolerated."

As it is legal in the state of Arkansas to be fired based on gender identity or sexual orientation, your support for the Employee Non-Discrimination Act is essential in protecting the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Arkansans. Workplace discrimination exists in Arkansas and across the nation. A 2007 analysis, from the Williams Institute at UCLA, of 50 studies of workplace discrimination against LGBT people found consistent evidence of bias in the workplace. The study also found that up to 68 percent of LGBT people reported experiencing employment discrimination, and up to 17 percent said they had been fired or denied employment.

LGBT Arkansans deserve and need the ability to work -- just like every American. Even Walmart Stores, Inc. has a corporate policy of prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation. Clearly, ENDA is good for business and good for Arkansas. ENDA includes exemptions for religious institutions and

businesses with few than 15 employees. Providing basic protections against workplace discrimination will ensure that all people are treated equally in the workplace. Every Arkansas should be judged solely on job performance rather than their gender, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, the color of their skin, etc.

It hasn't been that long since your gender would have precluded you from being a U.S. Senator or even voting for your representatives. Historically women suffered great oppression, forced to submit to the inequality of laws governing their lives. Today we know that it was wrong to treat women in this manner. The tremendous contributions of women such as you serve as continuous proof that this type of discrimination is wrong.

As the youngest woman ever elected to the United States Senate, you represent that Arkansans are willing to challenge traditional gender roles and empower the person most qualified for the job based on their skills. Please continue this Arkansas tradition by publicly supporting ENDA (S. 1584).

Sincerely,

Randi Romo, Executive Director  
Center for Artistic Revolution  
[artisticrevolution.org](http://artisticrevolution.org)

Anthony Clark, President  
NWA Center for Equality  
[nwaequality.org](http://nwaequality.org)

Joe LaFontaine, President  
Stonewall Democratic Caucus of Arkansas  
[stonewallarkansas.com](http://stonewallarkansas.com)

800 Scott Street  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72202  
November 9, 2009

Senator Mark Pryor  
255 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

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Your father was an important supporter of ENDA in 1996 but was not able to vote on it. Arkansas voters embraced you and sent you to the Senate to continue the outstanding legacy of your father. Please make him proud by protecting the LGBT citizens of Arkansas by publicly supporting ENDA (S. 1584).

Sincerely,

Randi Romo, Executive Director  
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[artisticrevolution.org](http://artisticrevolution.org)

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