

UNITED ENDA FAITH CALL NOVEMBER 2, 2009

Thanks to all who joined us this afternoon. This is a brief summary of the call as a reminder to those who were with us and an update for those not able to be there.

Welcome

Barbara Satin opened the call with a prayer. She thanked all those on the call and explained that this was a good opportunity to hear where things are with the inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act; the process that is underway and the ways for people of faith to be involved.

Barbara then introduced the United ENDA resource persons:

ENDA Status/Timing

Mara Keisling, Executive Director of the National Center for Transgender Equality, talked about the timing of actions in the House and Senate.

She pointed out that there is great optimism around LGBT equality issues. The goal is to pivot from the great success of the Hate Crimes legislation right into ENDA.

Mara cautioned that this is only an opportunity, not a guarantee. That success on ENDA will only come from the hard work of all who support LGBT equality

ENDA Activation

Jaan Williams of the National Center for Lesbian Rights talks about ways for faith based groups to be actively involved in support of ENDA. She pointed out that the time is now to be activating our folks. She had these suggestions for action:

1. Bulletin inserts for folks to use
 - a copy will be sent tomorrow
2. Email action alerts
 - we will send these to you as they are developed
3. Calls on Nov 19th, Faith Call in Day
 - information will be sent on this ASAP
 - they will get info on it later
4. Twitter/Facebook, EndaNow, retweeting requested
 - www.unitedenda.org is the web site that connects to a number of these resources. Check it out.
 - suggestions, please send them to us, join the group
5. Blogs & Op Eds
 - to affirm that people of faith, and of many faith traditions, embrace equality of opportunity for LGBT people
6. Letters to the editors, Op-Eds with local papers

- Responding particularly to anti-letters from religious voices.
- 7. If your group has physical meetings, take 5-10 minutes at the next meeting and have everyone call (at any time of day is fine, since voice mail and the Capital Switchboard are open 24/7!).

Lisa Mottet, Director of the Transgender Civil Rights Project of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, told the group to build their themes and timings around specific actions - hearing, markup, floor vote, etc.

1. Targets should be both House and Senate, but right now the calls or e-mails should be focused on the House.
2. Connect with other local chapters of other organizations: PFLAG, LGBT Community Centers, Stonewall Democrat chapters, LGBT youth serving organizations, etc. These groups are involved on the national level and are getting the word out to their folks about ways to help out. So, connect on a local level!

Lisa also talked about the Religious Exemption that is contained in ENDA. She pointed out that the wording is the same as in other civil rights legislation and has withstood court tests. ENDA poses no threat to hiring practices of religious organizations – no matter what is being said to the contrary.

Q & A

Barbara Satin moderated the question and answer session which revolved around how and when to get a variety of materials and information. Barbara will act as the connection point and will provide resources as they become available.

Closing

Barbara and the United ENDA resource persons thanked the group for their participation and again urged the involvement of their constituencies in working to enactment of an inclusive ENDA bill.

Barbara Satin
IWR and Faith Works Associate