

February 20, 2013

Barack Obama
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Washington, DC 20500

Re: Executive Order Adding LGBT Protections to Millions of Jobs

Dear Mr. President,

We were deeply moved by the passage in your second inaugural address connecting Seneca Falls and Selma to Stonewall, and we agree that “our journey is not complete until our gay brothers and sisters are treated like anyone else under the law.” Therefore, we write to urge you to take an immediate step toward legal equality by signing an executive order banning federal contractors from discriminating against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Americans.

Over the past 70 years, both Republican and Democratic presidents have used executive orders to ensure that taxpayer money is not wasted on workplace discrimination or harassment based on characteristics such as race, gender, and religion. These contractor policies exist to this day, and they cover almost one in four jobs throughout the United States. It is now time for an executive order ensuring the same workplace protections for LGBT Americans.

Most of the top government contractors—companies like Boeing, Raytheon, and Lockheed Martin—already have LGBT non-discrimination policies, and they adopted them because business leaders realize that discrimination is bad for the bottom line. A new executive order will primarily impact those hold-out contractors that are still complicit in sanctioning anti-LGBT workplace discrimination or harassment. According to a study by the Williams Institute, this executive order will provide 11 million additional employees with protection against sexual orientation discrimination and 16 million employees will be protected against gender identity discrimination. And it would ensure that there are at least some workplaces in every state with legally binding protections for LGBT Americans.

Your record of accomplishment from your first term demonstrates your strong commitment to the principle that all Americans deserve a fair shot to succeed regardless of who they are or whom they love. We urge you to begin your second term by taking strong executive action to prevent irrational workplace discrimination against LGBT Americans.

The time to act is now.

Sincerely,

9to5

Advocates for Youth

American Association of University Women (AAUW)

American Civil Liberties Union

American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO)

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), AFL-CIO

American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

American Humanist Association

Anti-Defamation League

Asian American Justice Center

Center for American Progress Action Fund

CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers

Council for Global Equality

Democracy for America

Family Equality Council

Freedom to Work

Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD)

GetEQUAL

GLMA: Health Professionals Advancing LGBT Equality

Human Rights Campaign

Immigration Equality

Interfaith Alliance

Japanese American Citizens League

Lambda Legal

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights

League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)

Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund

NAACP

National Black Justice Coalition

National Center for Lesbian Rights

National Center for Transgender Equality

National Council of Jewish Women

National Council of La Raza

National Employment Law Project

National Employment Lawyers Association (NELA)

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force

National Minority AIDS Council

National Partnership for Women & Families

National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance

National Women's Law Center

The Opportunity Agenda

OutServe-SLDN

People For the American Way

PFLAG National

Service Employees International Union

Services and Advocacy for GLBT Elders (SAGE)
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)
Southern Poverty Law Center
Transgender Law Center
Transgender Legal Defense & Education Fund
Unid@s, The National Latin@ LGBT Human Rights Organization
Union for Reform Judaism
United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE)
The Woodhull Sexual Freedom Alliance