

LGBT Sign-on Letter in Support of the October 5 National Day of Dignity and Respect for Humane Immigration Reform

An Open Letter in Support of the National Day of Dignity and Respect for Humane Immigration Reform

The lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) and allied organizations listed below strongly support the October 5 National Day of Dignity and Respect for Humane Immigration Reform. Our broken immigration system causes great harm and suffering to hundreds of thousands of LGBT and HIV-positive immigrants and aspiring citizens. We urge the House of Representatives to act quickly and urgently to pass humane immigration reform, including a pathway to citizenship and protection for vulnerable LGBT and HIV-positive immigrants, asylum seekers, and detainees.

We will stand with a broad spectrum of organizations and individuals on October 5 to tell Congress: Act NOW to pass humane immigration reform.

This year, the LGBT community has celebrated a tremendous victory in the fight for equality and justice for LGBT immigrant families. While we celebrate, we remain committed to humane immigration reform to ensure no LGBT immigrant – or any immigrant – is left behind. Our community and families have been excluded from our nation’s immigration laws for decades. Lesbian and gay immigrants were banned from immigrating to the United States until 1990, HIV-positive immigrants were banned from immigrating until 2010, and shockingly, the immigration ban on LGBT families continued until June 26 of this year when the Supreme Court overturned part of the Defense of Marriage Act.

After decades of discrimination and exclusion, LGBT family ties are finally recognized in our country’s immigration system, allowing us to now sponsor our spouses for green cards. As we celebrate this landmark win for LGBT immigrant families, we are working to fix the immigration system for all LGBT immigrants. We urgently need immigration reform that includes a pathway to citizenship for hundreds of thousands of undocumented LGBT immigrants, including LGBT DREAMers – young people who are doubly vulnerable for being undocumented and LGBT. We need reforms for LGBT and HIV-positive people seeking asylum in the U.S. because they face persecution and violence in their home countries, including many who are needlessly suffering in immigration detention. For these members of our community, the continued need for immigration reform is real and urgent.

We also need reforms that enable LGBT immigrants to contribute to and participate in affordable health care, housing, education, and nutrition programs as LGBT immigrants experience poorer health outcomes and higher barriers to the programs that support their health, success, and full integration.

Thus, we urge Congress to pass humane immigration reform that includes a meaningful pathway to citizenship, family reunification, a strong DREAM Act for undocumented youth, new protections for

workers, asylum-seekers, and detainees, and a commitment to the integration, health, and success of aspiring citizens.

We urge Representatives in Congress to oppose the SAFE Act (HR 2278), a punitive enforcement bill that would lead to dramatic levels of incarceration of immigrants. The SAFE Act would eliminate protections for immigrants – including the current policy that provides discretionary relief to prevent deportation of same-sex partners, and the policy that allows young undocumented LGBT DREAMers to receive temporary authorization to live and work in the U.S., the only country they've ever known as their home. The SAFE Act would also subject many LGBT and HIV-positive asylum seekers fleeing persecution to indefinite detention in the U.S., re-traumatizing them following brutal mistreatment in their home countries. Finally, the SAFE Act would devolve immigration enforcement to states and localities, leading to racial profiling and rupturing the critical ties between police and LGBT immigrant communities, thus making our communities less safe for everyone.

We will take action and join our local communities and immigrant brothers and sisters on October 5 in support of humane immigration reform. As LGBT and allied organizations, we are proud to speak with a strong, unified voice for LGBT and all immigrants.

Signed by:

Immigration Equality Action Fund

9to5

Advocates for Women

American Civil Liberties Union

American Federation of Teachers (AFT)

Americans for Immigrant Justice

API Equality - Northern California

Arab American Association of NY

Asian Americans Advancing Justice-AAJC

Asian Pacific Policy & Planning Council

Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice

Believe Out Loud

Bethel Christian Church- DC

Border Action Network

Breakthrough

California Latinas for Reproductive Justice

Campus Pride

CAUSA, Oregon's Immigrant Rights Coalition

Center for APA Women

Center for Popular Democracy

CenterLink: The Community of LGBT Centers

Central American Resource Center—CARECEN—of Northern California

CHOICES Memphis Center for Reproductive Health

Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity Reproductive Rights

Community United Against Violence (CUAV)

Council for Global Equality

CourageCampaign.org
DRM Action Coalition
Equal Justice Task Force-African American Ministers In Action
Equality California
Equality Federation
Equality Florida
Equality Ohio
Equality Pennsylvania
Equality Utah
Family Equality Council
Florida Immigrant Coalition
Garden State Equality
Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders
Generational Alliance
GetEqual
Hispanic Federation
Human Rights Campaign
Institute for Science and Human Values, Inc.
Kansas National Organization for Women
Lambda Legal
Latino GLBT History Project
Love Exiles Foundation
Make the Road New York
Marriage Equality USA
Mission Economic Development Agency (MEDA)
National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF)
National Center for Lesbian Rights
National Center for Transgender Equality
National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs
National Council of Jewish Women
National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund
National Immigrant Justice Center
National Immigration Law Center
National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
National Minority AIDS Council
National Organization for Women
National Queer Asian Pacific Islander Alliance
Network on Religion and Justice for Asian Pacific Islander LGBTQ people
New York City Anti-Violence Project
New York Legal Assistance Group LGBT Project
One Colorado
OneAmerica
Our Family Coalition
Out4Immigration

Pineros Y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste, PCUN
People For the American Way
PFLAG National
Pride at Work AFL CIO
Promise Arizona
Queerocracy
San Francisco Day Labor Program & Women's Collective
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS)
South Carolina Equality
Stonewall Community Foundation
Student Working for Equal Rights
The Fellowship of Affirming Ministries
The Reproductive Health Access Project
The Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition
The Washtenaw Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights
Transgender Law Center
United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
United We Dream
Unity Coalition | Coalicion Unida, Inc