

# Equality for All!

While important strides have been made in achieving equality for LGBTQ+ individuals, a great deal of work remains to ensure they have basic legal protections in states across the country. Nationwide marriage equality ensured that same-sex couples have the right to marriage in all 50 states, yet, under federal law and most states' laws, LGBTQ+ people aren't explicitly protected from discrimination on the job, in the workplace, housing, or public accommodations. In many states, this means that a same-sex couple could legally marry one day and risk being fired from their jobs, excluded from jury duty, evicted from their apartment, or refused service at a restaurant the very next day.

**The Equality Act (H.R. 5/S. 788)** ensures that the same protections our nation has already extended based on characteristics like race, sex, and religion are equally available to LGBTQ+ people. This bill would amend existing that federal civil rights laws to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in education, employment, housing, credit, and Federal jury service. Additionally, the *Equality Act* would update the public spaces covered in the current law to include retail stores, services such as banks and legal services and transportation services.

The Act also would also provide protections for women not covered in the *Civil Rights Act* of 1964. Women would be protected from discrimination in public places and in the distribution of federal funds. The Act would ensure women are charged the same price as men for goods and services. It would also provide protection from discrimination in the distribution of federal funds, such as the awarding of a federal contract.

Further, the *Equality Act* would also extend protections from discrimination to individuals who associate with LGBTQ+ individuals, such as children of same sex couples, in the same sectors of work, employment, housing, credit, education, public accommodations, or jury service. This is a vital piece of

legislation for furthering the rights of LGBTQ+ individuals and women. By explicitly including sexual orientation and gender identity in these fundamental laws, LGBTQ+ people will finally be afforded the exact same protections as other historically discriminated groups under federal law.