GENDER PUBLIC ADVOCACY COALITION

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

April 23, 2003

Member of Congress,

For the past several years, at the beginning of each session of Congress, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) has requested Members of Congress to state in writing that their office does not discriminate based on employees' sexual orientation. At the same time, the Gender Public Advocacy Coalition (GenderPAC) has independently requested Members of Congress to state in writing that their office does not discriminate based on employees' gender identity and expression.

This year, in an important step for civil rights, GenderPAC and HRC have combined efforts to ask Members of Congress to sign a single joint statement affirming that they do not discriminate in the employment practices of their offices based on employees' *sexual orientation and gender identity and expression*.

We hope you will join the growing list of your colleagues who expressly prohibit this kind of discrimination in their personal offices, by signing the attached form and returning it to GenderPAC or HRC.

HRC, GenderPAC, and legal experts agree that to ensure that all members of the workforce are protected by non-discrimination policies, we must have clear language that protects those of us who are targets of discrimination because we may not conform to society's gender stereotypes.

One clear and unambiguous non-discrimination policy helps all employees -- gay, straight, bisexual or transgender -- who transcend or are perceived to transcend traditional gender norms for masculinity or femininity because of their dress, behavior, sexual orientation, or transgender status.

Discrimination against heterosexual women because of their gender expression is well-documented. Now, according to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), substantial numbers of male employees are also finding themselves targets for such discrimination, including men who are harassed for being insufficiently aggressive, being perceived as effeminate, or simply for not meeting a sales quota.

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN
919 18th Street, NW – Suite 800 – Washington, DC 20006 – www.hrc.org
GENDER PUBLIC ADVOCACY COALITION
1743 Connecticut Ave, NW - 4th Floor – Washington, DC 20009 – www.gpac.org

Employers are already moving to enact such protections. According to GenderPAC's Workplace Fairness Program and the Human Rights Campaign Foundation's WorkNet Project, such blue-chip Fortune 500 firms as Aetna, American Airlines, Apple Computer, Bank One, Capital One, Eastman Kodak, IBM, Intel, JPMorgan Chase, NCR, Nike, and Xerox have already added these protections to their Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) policies. Over 100 other private employers have done likewise.

More than 60 state and local jurisdictions have acted too. Cities across the country like Tucson, AZ; Springfield, IL; Louisville, KY; and Toledo, OH, as well as the States of Minnesota, Rhode Island and–just this March–New Mexico have all passed laws adding gender identity and expression protections to their non-discrimination statutes.

Public perception has also been changing, especially regarding transgender Americans, who are traditionally among the most disfavored when it comes to discrimination based on gender stereotypes. In September 2002, HRC announced the results of a major poll of public perceptions of transgender Americans they commissioned from Lake Snell Perry & Associates Inc. The results showed that while most people accept that a person can be transgender, they need more education. More importantly, the data showed that most respondents want transgender Americans treated fairly, and protected from hate crime assaults and workplace discrimination.

We hope you will agree that discrimination is wrong and will not be tolerated in your office. To add your name to the list of Members who oppose such discrimination, please sign the attached statement and return it to Nancy Buermeyer at GenderPAC via fax at (202) 462-6744 and/or Christopher Labonte at HRC via fax at (202) 347-5323. If you have a policy against signing pledges, simply write a brief letter making clear that sexual orientation and gender identity and expression are not considerations in hiring, termination, promotion or other employment decisions in your office. You can view the full list of current Congressional signatories at www.gpac.org/workplace/congressionalsignatories.html or http://www.hrc.org/congress/policies.asp.

We look forward to hearing from you and should you require any further information on this or any other issues related to workplace discrimination, please do not hesitate to contact GenderPAC at (202) 462-6610 or HRC at (202) 628-4160.

Sincerely,

Winnie Stachelberg

Riki Wilchins

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN
919 18th Street, NW – Suite 800 – Washington, DC 20006 – www.hrc.org
GENDER PUBLIC ADVOCACY COALITION
1743 Connecticut Ave, NW - 4th Floor – Washington, DC 20009 – www.gpac.org

Political Director
Human Rights Campaign

Executive Director
Gender Public Advocacy Coalition

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN
919 18th Street, NW – Suite 800 – Washington, DC 20006 – www.hrc.org
GENDER PUBLIC ADVOCACY COALITION
1743 Connecticut Ave, NW - 4th Floor – Washington, DC 20009 – www.gpac.org

GENDER PUBLIC ADVOCACY COALITION

HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

The sexual orientation and gender identity and expression of an individual is not a consideration in the hiring, promoting or terminating of an employee in my office.

Date: 7-8-03

Member's Signature

PETE STARK

Member's Name

Please fax back to the Gender PAC at 202.462.6744 or the Human Rights Campaign at 202-347-5323