

EDUCATION & LABOR COMMITTEE

Congressman George Miller, Chairman

Wednesday, September 05, 2007
Press Office, 202-226-0853

**Chairman Andrews Statement at Subcommittee Hearing on The
Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2007 (H.R. 2015)**

WASHINGTON, D.C. – *Below are the prepared remarks of U.S. Rep. Rob Andrews (D-NJ), chairman of the House Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions, for a subcommittee hearing on “The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2007 (H.R. 2015)”*

Good morning and welcome to the Health, Employment, Labor and Pensions Subcommittee hearing on H.R. 1015, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act.

Today marks a historic moment in the committee’s history. Despite being the primary committee of jurisdiction, this is the first time our committee has considered this important piece of legislation that would extend federal employment discrimination protections to workers based on sexual orientation and gender identity, in addition to protection that already exists for race, gender religion, national origin, age and disability.

The legislation we will consider today, also known as ENDA, is a bill about fairness and access to equal opportunity for employment to gays, lesbians, bisexual, transgender and heterosexuals. ENDA would prohibit an employer from discriminating against an employee based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Although the bill provides basic protections for everyone, it focuses on protecting gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people from employment discrimination.

Today, we will hear firsthand from individuals who have experienced employment discrimination based on their sexual orientation. We will also hear from an academic researcher who has conducted an extensive analysis of several surveys about employment sexual orientation discrimination.

The problem of discrimination based on sexual orientation is real and it is our goal today to examine a solution.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the sponsors of ENDA for testifying before us today. Congressman Barney Frank and Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin have vigorously worked to bring this legislation before us today and I admire them for their courage and steadfast determination.

The late Coretta Scott King said, “Americans who believe in freedom, tolerance and human rights have a responsibility to oppose bigotry and prejudice based on sexual orientation.” We intend to carry out that vision today.

I would like to thank all the witnesses for their testimony today and look forward to hearing from them. Thank you.

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