



Human Rights Campaign Foundation Report: Number of Businesses Protecting Transgender Employees Growing

60 of the Fortune 100 largest businesses and nearly half of the nation's largest law firms, best colleges and universities now prohibit discrimination based on gender identity

WASHINGTON – The Human Rights Campaign Foundation, the educational arm of the nation's largest lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender civil rights organization, today released its State of the Workplace report, showing rapid expansion of protections for LGBT workers in the private sector over the past decade. At this time, 35 percent — a total of 175 — of the Fortune 500 businesses have gender identity protections, including 60 of the top 100 Fortune-ranked businesses. In 2000, just three of the Fortune 500 businesses had such protections. Furthermore, 85 percent of the Fortune 500 businesses now have protections based on sexual orientation, compared to 51 percent in 2000. To download this year's report, visit www.hrc.org/StateOfTheWorkplace.

“This report shows that the country's largest and most competitive employers are most likely to have added protections based on gender identity and sexual orientation, setting consistent expectations of equal opportunity for their employees and job applicants regardless of where they work in the United States,” said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese.

The report assesses the current state of employment laws and employer policies surrounding gender identity and sexual orientation throughout the United States. For the first time, more than 100 cities and counties now prohibit employment discrimination based on both gender identity and sexual orientation. Already, twelve states and the District of Columbia have protections in place. An additional eight states and 80 cities and counties prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation alone.

In addition, more employers have improved benefits to ensure fair treatment of LGBT employees and their families. Since 2006, a majority of Fortune 500 companies have offered benefits to same-sex partners of employees. Today, 57 percent — a total of 286 — of the Fortune 500 companies offer domestic partner benefits. Removing discriminatory exclusions for medically necessary, transgender-specific treatment is a rapidly-emerging trend. Eighteen of the Fortune 100 now provide transgender-inclusive health insurance, compared to just one in 2001.

Businesses demonstrated overwhelming support for LGBT equality under the law in 2007 and 2008. Several major California businesses publicly and financially opposed Proposition 8 in 2008, and more than 50 major businesses have joined the Business Coalition for Workplace Fairness, which supports passing federal legislation that would add both gender identity and sexual orientation to existing classes protected under federal employment law.

“Millions of people work in cities, counties and states where discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation is still legal. Particularly as so many workers are losing their jobs, no one should have to face the added worry of losing their job simply because of who they are. Employers and lawmakers alike should support the federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act to establish clear and consistent expectations that workers should be evaluated based on their ability to do their job — and not based on their gender identity or sexual orientation,” said Solmonese.

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation released the first State of the Workplace report in 1999. To learn more about the HRC Workplace Project, which authored the report, visit www.hrc.org/Workplace.

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation is America's largest civil rights organization working to achieve lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender equality. By inspiring and engaging all Americans, HRC strives to end discrimination against LGBT citizens and realize a nation that achieves fundamental fairness and equality for all.