



## Support Workplace Fairness

*Nobody should fear being fired or not hired because of their sexual orientation or gender identity*

Most Virginians think it is *already illegal* to fire somebody because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT)<sup>1</sup>. The truth is Virginia's current law does not protect LGBT employees, or those perceived to be LGBT, from discrimination in the workplace.

### **THE PROBLEM:**

- Hardworking Virginians, who happen to be lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, can be fired for reasons that have nothing to do with their job performance.
- Because there is no legal protection for LGBT employees, many people are forced to hide who they are at work. This type of work climate can lead to psychological distress, less job satisfaction, and decreased productivity. Ultimately some hardworking employees are likely to resign because they don't want to be mistreated or see their LGBT coworkers being mistreated.
- The bottom line: Allowing discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation or gender identity is bad for business, bad for Virginia's economy, and bad for Virginia's workers and families.

### **THE FACTS:**

- Under current state law, individuals are protected from discrimination based on their race, color, religion, national origin, sex, pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions, age, marital status, disability, or status as a veteran. *LGBT people are not protected under those same laws.*
- Nearly seventy five percent of Virginians favor a state law that would protect LGBT people from employment discrimination<sup>2</sup>.
- The majority of Fortune 500 Companies have policies in place to protect workers based on gender identity and sexual orientation<sup>3</sup>.
- As of May 2014, eighteen states and D.C. have passed laws to protect LGBT workers<sup>4</sup>.

### **THE SOLUTION:**

- All Virginians, including LGBT people, should be treated fairly and equally under the law. If a person is willing and able to work, they should have a level playing field where they are judged solely on their qualifications and performance.
- A workplace non-discrimination bill would ensure that public employees in the Commonwealth of Virginia would not be discriminated against and that employment decisions would be based on merit.
- Virginians, business leaders, and elected officials from both sides of the aisle agree that creating a welcoming and inclusive Virginia is the right thing to do, is good for business, and good for Virginia's workers and families.

**Virginia must treat its workers based on how well they do their jobs, not on who they are or who they love.**

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*Equality Virginia is a state-wide, non-partisan advocacy, outreach, and education organization leading the Commonwealth toward equality for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Virginians.*

<sup>1</sup> Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, *Poll: New Attitudes in the New Dominion*, July 11, 2013

<sup>2</sup> Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, *Poll: New Attitudes in the New Dominion*, July 11, 2013

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.hrc.org/resources/entry/lgbt-equality-at-the-fortune-500>

<sup>4</sup> [http://hrc-assets.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/files/assets/resources/statewide\\_employment\\_5-2014.pdf](http://hrc-assets.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/files/assets/resources/statewide_employment_5-2014.pdf)