



HUMAN
RIGHTS
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**Testimony of Brian Rice on Raised House Bill 5723,
An Act Concerning Discrimination, Before the Judiciary Committee**

Good afternoon Senator McDonald, Representative Lawlor, and distinguished committee members. My name is Brian Rice and I am a resident of Stamford. I am here today as a member of the Board of Governors of the Human Rights Campaign, a national gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender civil rights organization with more than 4,000 members in Connecticut. On behalf of the Human Rights Campaign, I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of Raised House Bill 5723, An Act Concerning Discrimination.

This legislation is about basic fairness and equality under the law for everyone in the state of Connecticut. This bill would expand current nondiscrimination laws to include gender identity or expression. As such, this bill would provide critical protections for people who are transgender, but it will also provide important protections for people who are gay, lesbian, bisexual, and even heterosexual individuals who express themselves in ways that do not conform with stereotypes about what it means to be male or female.

Connecticut already prohibits discrimination on the basis of age, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, and other protected characteristics. No one should be denied the right to work, access to public accommodations, access to housing, or credit on the basis of these characteristics. And no one should be denied access to these necessities on the basis of their gender identity or their gender expression. Someone shouldn't lose their job because their boss thinks they aren't a "man's man", or because they don't fit a stereotype of what it means to be feminine. People should not be denied basic rights because they present themselves in a way that is seen by some as unconventional.

All nondiscrimination laws recognize certain basic truths: We are all human beings; we all deserve equal protection under the law; we all deserve the same benefits that government provides; and we all should be judged on our actions, on the merits of our work, not who we are.

This legislation is critically important because discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression is real, and it has real consequences. You will hear from witnesses today who will share their stories of the discrimination they have experienced. Statistical evidence shows that discrimination on the basis of gender identity is widespread. For example, a 2006 survey in San Francisco found that 57% of respondents had experienced employment discrimination on the basis of gender identity or gender expression. (See June 2007 Williams Institute report, available at:
<http://www.law.ucla.edu/williamsinstitute/publications/Bias%20in%20the%20Workplace.pdf>).

Connecticut has been a leader in providing protections against discrimination. In 1991 Connecticut became the fourth state to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Connecticut, however, is falling behind other fair-minded states and employers the longer it waits to pass this legislation.

Already 13 states and the District of Columbia have added gender identity and expression to their nondiscrimination laws. States like Maine, Vermont, New Jersey, Colorado, and Iowa, already provide the type of protections this bill would provide in Connecticut. More than 90 cities and counties across the United States already have these protections on the books.

Hundreds of employers have also implemented policies rejecting discrimination based on gender identity or expression. 152 Fortune 500 Companies and at least 72 Connecticut companies already include gender identify or expression in their nondiscrimination policies.

Connecticut is ready to add gender identity or expression to its nondiscrimination laws. In fact, all five of Connecticut's U.S. Representatives cosponsored federal employment nondiscrimination legislation that included gender identity. Now is the time to extend Connecticut's nondiscrimination laws to include gender identity or expression and prohibit needless discrimination against individuals simply because of who they are.

Thank you very much for your time and the opportunity to present this testimony.



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**re: Testimony of Brian Rice on Raised House Bill 5723,
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The list of 72 companies headquartered in Connecticut that have nondiscrimination policies covering gender identity comes from material compiled by the Human Rights Campaign Foundation. HRCF maintains an online searchable database of U.S. employers and their GLBT-related policies at http://www.hrc.org/issues/workplace/search_employers.htm . Information on the database is derived from HRCF's annual Corporate Equality index survey as well as from independent research.

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Human Rights Campaign

Date: 03/18/2008

EMPLOYER INFORMATION

State: Connecticut
Policy/Law Type: Non-discrimination policy covers gender identity

Number of Results: 72

	CEI RATING	FORTUNE RANK	ORGANIZATION	CITY	STATE
1			ABB Inc.	Norwalk	CT
2	100	85	Aetna Inc.	Hartford	CT
3		751	Amphenol Corporation	Wallingford	CT
4			Anchor Stampings	Waterbury	CT
5		874	Applera Corp.	Norwalk	CT
6			Arch Chemicals Inc.	Norwalk	CT
7			Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Connecticut	North Haven	CT
8			Blyth, Inc.	Greenwich	CT
9	100		Boehringer Ingelheim Pharmaceuticals Inc.	Ridgefield	CT
10			Carrier Corp.	Farmington	CT
11			Central Connecticut State University	New Britain	CT
12			Cenveo Inc.	Stamford	CT
13			Champion International	Stamford	CT
14		555	Chemtura Corp.	Middlebury	CT
15		825	Citizens Communications Company	Stamford	CT
16			Connecticut College	New London	CT
17			Connecticut State Universities	New Britain	CT
18		795	Crane Co.	Stamford	CT
19			Day, Berry & Howard	Hartford	CT
20	95		Diageo North America	Norwalk	CT
21			Duty Free International	Richfield	CT
22			Eastern Connecticut State University	Willimantic	CT
23		448	EMCOR Group Inc	Norwalk	CT
24			FuelCell Energy Inc.	Danbury	CT
25	75	6	General Electric Co.	Fairfield	CT
26			GeneralCologne Re	Stamford	CT
27			Green Ink Communications	Voluntown	CT
28			Hamilton Standard	Windsor Locks	CT
29	100	82	Hartford Financial Services Co.	Hartford	CT
30			Hartford University	W. Hartford	CT
31			Highland Manufacturing	Waterbury	CT
32		765	Hubbell Inc.	Orange	CT
33		870	IMS Health Inc.	Norwalk	CT

34			Kaman Aerospace Corp.	Bloomfield	CT
35			Louis Dreyfus North American	Wilton	CT
36		949	Magellan Health Services Inc.	Avon	CT
37			Mitchell College	New London	CT
38			Murtha Cullina LLP	Hartford	CT
39			Nine West	Stamford	CT
40	80	337	Northeast Utilities System	Berlin	CT
41			Otis Elevator	Farmington	CT
42			PanAmSat Corp.	Greenwich	CT
43			PE Corp.	Norwalk	CT
44			People's Bank	Bridgeport	CT
45		726	Phoenix Companies, Inc.	Hartford	CT
46	85	395	Pitney Bowes Inc.	Stamford	CT
47			Pratt & Whitney Co.	East Hartford	CT
48	25	291	Praxair Inc.	Danbury	CT
49			Sikorsky Helicopter	Stratford	CT
50			Southern Connecticut University	New Haven	CT
51			Sports Leisure Magazine	Trumbull	CT
52		521	Stanley Works	New Britain	CT
53		314	Terex Corporation	Westport	CT
54			Thomson Corp., The	Stamford	CT
55			Trinity College	Hartford	CT
56	100		UBS AG	Stamford	CT
57			Union Carbide Corp.	Danbury	CT
58		760	United Natural Foods, Inc.	Dayville	CT
59			United States Surgical Corp.	Norwalk	CT
60	40	42	United Technologies Corp.	Hartford	CT
61			University of Connecticut	Storrs	CT
62			University of New Haven	West Haven	CT
63			Updike Kelly & Spellacy	Hartford	CT
64		923	UST Inc	Greenwich	CT
65		423	W.R. Berkley	Greenwich	CT
66			Webster Financial Corp.	Waterbury	CT
67			Wesleyan University	Middletown	CT
68			Western Connecticut University	Danbury	CT
69			Wiggin Dana LLP	New Haven	CT
70			Withers Bergman	New Haven	CT
71	100	145	Xerox Corp.	Stamford	CT
72			Yale University	New Haven	CT

These data represent the best efforts of the Human Rights Campaign Foundation to track laws and policies that relate to sexual orientation and gender identity discrimination, and workplace same-sex benefits. Because of the proprietary nature of human resource information and because there is no centralized place where laws and policies must be reported, some entities that have inclusive policies for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans may not appear. Also, while every effort is made to confirm the existence of these laws and policies, some may have been included in error. The information offered here is intended for educational purposes only. It does not constitute, and should not in any cases be regarded as or relied upon as, legal, or professional advice. If you require individualized legal advice, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation highly recommends that you consult an attorney.

We encourage readers with additions, corrections, questions or comments to contact: HRC WorkNet at: HRCWorkNet@hrc.org.