

March 18, 2009

The Honorable Sen. Andrew McDonald and Rep. Michael Lawlor

The Judiciary Committee

Room 2500, Legislative Office Building  
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Support for HB 6452, An Act Concerning Discrimination

Mr. McDonald, Mr. Lawlor, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to show my support for HB 6452: An Act Concerning Discrimination. This bill is an integral part of protecting those who chose to express their gender according to their own wants or needs, regardless of whether or not it conforms to their prescribed or perceived gender sex at birth. The issues of gender identity and expression touch any and all residents of Connecticut who consider themselves gender non-conformists and or chose to reject gender prescriptions on a daily basis.

I am a lifelong resident of Connecticut and am currently a student at Southern Connecticut State University. In my life I have known and cherished friends who have transitioned genders and I have seen the daily struggles they have faced just in navigating a world that can be hostile or indifferent to their needs and situations. If they are not expressly protected by state law and considered a protected class of citizen, then the state of Connecticut is, in effect, sanctioning discrimination.

Without the protection afforded in this bill, gender non-conforming citizens of Connecticut may hesitate before applying for a job, applying for housing or applying for education. As a result, without this important protection we stand to lose the best of our citizens. Connecticut faces an economic crisis on par with the rest of our country and we need to remain competitive. To do so we need all of our citizens to be fully participatory and to contribute to the recovery of our state. It is impossible for ALL citizens to do so if HB 6452 is not put into law. Moreover, the state has a responsibility to protect and serve the needs of every single one of its residents, regardless of race, national origin, sex, sexual orientation and now most importantly gender identity and expression.

Thank you so much for your time and attention on this incredibly important matter,

Pat Comerford  
177 Willard Street, Apt. A,  
New Haven, CT, 06515