



February 25, 2021

United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law (hereinafter "Lawyers' Committee"), a nonpartisan civil rights organization formed at the request of President John F. Kennedy to enlist the private bar in providing legal services to address racial discrimination, we urge you to vote for the Equality Act (H.R. 5). The Equality Act would clarify that LGBTQ+ people are protected against discrimination in access to credit, housing, education, and employment under federal law, as well as to strengthen public accommodation antidiscrimination for all people.

The Lawyers' Committee strongly believes that the Equality Act is an essential step in fulfilling our nation's commitment to civil rights for all people. Unfortunately, discrimination is a persistent problem for millions of people in the LGBTQ+ community, particularly for those who also identify as people of color. Everyone in America, regardless of who they are, is entitled to equal rights and should be free to pursue career and educational opportunities and live their daily lives free from discrimination.

Black Americans and other people of color continue to face persistent discrimination while engaging in commonplace transactions, errands, and tasks, such as shopping and accessing transportation like taxis and car services.¹ The Equality Act would finally make this discrimination illegal, as it strengthens the public accommodations provision in the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Congress must act now to pass the Equality Act to clarify and strengthen federal civil rights protections so everyone across the country can engage in public life without the fear of harassment or discrimination because of who they are.

As Congress considers this important bill, we are committed to ensuring the Equality Act does solely what it was intended to do: clarify and strengthen existing federal civil rights protections for everyone in America. We strongly oppose any effort to weaken any existing federal civil rights law the Equality Act would amend.

We urge you to vote for final passage of the Equality Act because no one in our country should be discriminated against for who they are. It is time for Congress to clarify

¹ Melissa Repko, "As Black buying power grows, racial profiling by retailers remains persistent problem" July 5, 2020, <https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/05/as-black-buying-power-grows-racial-profiling-by-retailers-remains-a-problem.html>; Anne E. Brown, "L.A.'s taxi industry discriminates against black riders. If we don't force them to change, they won't" L.A. Times, Aug. 12, 2018, <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/livable-city/la-oe-brown-racism-taxi-uber-lyft-201812-story.html>.



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and strengthen federal civil rights protections for all Americans. If you have any questions, please contact Erinn D. Martin, Policy Counsel, at emartin@lawyerscommittee.org.

Respectfully submitted,

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