



## Washington State Bans Discrimination Against GLBT Citizens

By [GayWebMonkey.com](http://GayWebMonkey.com)

---

Olympia, WA - The Washington state Senate passed a bill today protecting gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people from discrimination, making Washington the 17th state to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation and the 7th state based on gender identity. For procedural reasons the bill was sent back to the House, which already passed the bill. It now goes to Gov. Christine Gregoire, who pledged to sign it.

"States like Washington are picking up the slack as fairness remains stalled in Congress," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. "More than one-third of Americans now live in a state where it's illegal to fire a hard-working employee just for being gay."

A broad-based coalition of religious organizations, large and small businesses, civil rights groups, and concerned citizens advocated for the bill. Leading supporters include Washington employers Microsoft, Boeing, Corbis, Hewlett Packard, Nike and RealNetworks weathering calls for boycotts by extremists organizations.

"Businesses support non-discrimination protections because recruiting and retaining the best talent is good for their bottom line," said Solmonese. "Fair-minded consumers, employees and investors will not soon forget their leadership on ensuring fairness."

A sexual orientation non-discrimination bill was first introduced in the Washington legislature in 1976. It failed by one vote in the state Senate last year.

"These important legal protections are the product of decades of work by thousands of Washingtonians committed to equal treatment for every citizen," said Solmonese. "We applaud Equal Rights Washington and other groups who are opening hearts and minds in communities across the state."

Over the past year, the Human Rights Campaign has worked closely with Equal Rights Washington in coordinating grassroots efforts to pass the nondiscrimination bill. The Human Rights Campaign has also provided substantial funding for advertising, polling and administrative support in addition to sending more than 10 staff members to Washington. Additionally, the Human Rights Campaign helped to garner business support for the bill by working with various large corporations.

The Human Rights Campaign is the largest national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender political organization with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support and educates the public to ensure that LGBT Americans can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.