



Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) individuals are being deprived of certain rights granted to others and are subjected to discrimination both legally and personally.

SCHOOL BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

FACT

While bullying at school affects one in four students, the percentage of LGBT students affected by bullying is staggering. Nearly two-thirds of LGBT students feel unsafe because of their sexual orientation, with almost three-fourths of LGBT students affected by bullying and harassment. Teachers and administrators often do nothing in response to LGBT harassment and bullying.

WHAT THAT MEANS

LGBT students miss school because of safety concerns at a rate that is almost five times the national average. The suicide rate for LGBT students is three to four times higher than that of their straight counterparts.

GOALS

Pass the Safe Schools Improvement Act (SSIA) to require that schools' codes of conduct specifically prohibit bullying and harassment and that states include bullying and harassment data in their state-wide needs assessment reporting. Pass the Student Non-Discrimination Act (SNDA) to prohibit school programs or activities that receive federal funding from discriminating against any public school students on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

MARRIAGE EQUALITY

FACT

Same-sex couples, denied the right to marry, are blocked from more than 1,000 federal rights, protections, and privileges for themselves and their families that married heterosexual couples receive automatically. Even in states in which same-sex couples are afforded the right to marry legally, the Defense of Marriage Act means they are still denied federal rights.

WHAT THAT MEANS

This discrimination places a unique burden on families headed by same-sex couples. Programs like the Family and Medical Leave Act and social security benefits are out of reach for families headed by same-sex couples, while unfair taxes on domestic partner benefits place an extra financial burden on them.

GOALS

Replace the Defense of Marriage Act, which denies legally-married, same-sex couples the same benefits as heterosexual couples, with the Respect for Marriage Act, and oppose measures at the state level that prohibit legalization of same-sex marriage. Legalize same-sex marriage in all states, and oppose State and Federal Constitutional amendments such as Proposition 8 in California and the impending HB1434 in Pennsylvania.

equality matters

ADOPTION EQUALITY

FACT

Florida and Arkansas prohibit adoption of children by LGBT couples and individuals. Most states allow single LGBT adoptions, but few states specifically permit joint gay adoption.

WHAT THAT MEANS

In families headed by same-sex couples, only one parent can legally adopt the child initially in states that do not legally permit joint adoption by same-sex couples. That means that same-sex couples are forced to go through the expensive and time-consuming process of adoption a second time to add the second parent to the adoption. For heterosexual couples, adoption happens for both parents in one process.

GOALS

Pass state-wide measures to permit single and joint LGBT adoptions.

EMPLOYMENT EQUALITY

FACT

It is legal in 29 states to fire a gay or lesbian worker because of his or her sexual orientation. It is legal in 37 states to turn away a transgendered individual because of that individual's gender identity.

WHAT THAT MEANS

Employment discrimination forces LGBT individuals to hide their identity and, when applicable, their families and relationships. Qualified employees are left jobless or passed over for promotions because of this discrimination.

GOALS

Pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) to prohibit employment discrimination based on gender identity or sexual orientation.

While legislation can alleviate many of the injustices faced by LGBT individuals and couples, compassion and education are necessary at the personal level. Please help by promoting understanding.



or more information about PAN's projects or to donate, please visit our website:

www.peaceadvocacynetwork.org

PAN promotes a peaceful existence through veganism, social justice, and respect for the Earth's inhabitants and resources.

equality matters