

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Interested Parties
FROM: Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc.
DATE: February 26, 2007
RE: Results of Survey on Employment Non-discrimination

*From January 31 to February 5, 2007, Hart Research conducted a national survey among 1,002 registered voters on behalf of the Human Rights Campaign. The margin of error for the survey is ± 3.1 percentage points for the full sample, and is larger for subgroups of the electorate. The survey's purpose was to measure voters' attitudes toward the **Employment Non-discrimination Act (ENDA)**; this memorandum outlines key findings from the research.*

Americans today are in a place where they want and support equal rights for gays and lesbians in the workplace. In a 2005 Gallup survey, 87% of the public said that gays and lesbians should have equal rights in job opportunities. This demand for equality translates into strong and broad support for congressional action to prevent employment discrimination.

- **Six in 10 voters support a federal law to prevent discrimination in the workplace.** Fifty-eight percent (58%) of voters say they favor Congress's passing a law that would make it illegal for employers to fire, refuse to hire, or refuse to promote employees on the basis of a person's sexual orientation or gender identity. This includes 42% who strongly favor Congress's taking this action. Thirty-seven percent (37%) say they oppose it, including 26% who strongly oppose it.
- **ENDA support crosses partisan, racial, economic, and geographic lines.** Majorities of voters in all income brackets and all regions of the country favor Congressional action on ENDA. Majorities of white (58%), African-American (61%), and Latino (56%) voters also favor the bill, as do self-described Democrats (70%), independents (55%), and Republican women (52%).
- **Voters believe that employment decisions should be based only on people's qualifications and that employees have a right to privacy.** Voters say that there are a number of convincing reasons to support the bill, with two particularly standing out:
 - ✓ **A person's sexual orientation has nothing to do with the quality of their work.** Employment decisions should be based solely on people's qualifications and job performance.
 - ✓ **Employers should not control how their employees live their private lives.** As long as it does not interfere with their work, workers should be able to love whomever they choose without having to fear losing their job.

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Additionally, a plurality of voters say the fact that ENDA does not prevent employers from firing lazy and incompetent employees is a very convincing reason to support the bill.

- **Voters believe that transgender, gay, and lesbian employees should be protected from discrimination.** Among those who favor passing employment protection, the vast majority (72%) favor including both gay and transgender people in these protections, with only a small minority (11%) indicating that Congress should exclude transgender people from the law.
- **None of the major arguments against ENDA resonates with Americans.** We tested seven strongly worded arguments against ENDA—including the notions that it will force religious organizations to go against their beliefs; that it will create thousands more lawsuits; and that we should not give gay employees protections that others do not have—and none yields a majority who say that it is a very convincing reason to oppose the bill.