



WHY PEOPLE OF FAITH SUPPORT NONDISCRIMINATION PROTECTIONS FOR LGBTQ AMERICANS

Across the country, millions of Americans hold their faith and religion to be one of the primary lenses through which they understand and engage with the world. For many Americans, values like treating others fairly, equally and with respect are rooted in faith and religious teachings.

Increasingly, people of faith are leading the conversation about why protecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people matters—and why they support comprehensive nondiscrimination protections because of their faith, not in spite of it.

There's no question that America is ready for these protections. Substantial majorities in every major religious group support nondiscrimination laws that protect LGBTQ people, including 6 in 10 Evangelical Protestants, 8 in 10 Catholics, 8 in 10 Latter-day Saints and 8 in 10 Jewish Americans.

THE GOLDEN RULE

§ People of faith believe that we're all called to respect the fundamental dignity of all people and to treat others as we want to be treated, including those who may seem different from us. When we do that, we are truly living our faith.

§ We revere the importance of the Golden Rule—and how this key tenet of our personal ethics compels us to support protecting all Americans from discrimination. Treating others as we would want to be treated involves ensuring that all Americans are protected equally.

§ Supporting fundamental protections for all Americans is important to people of faith because LGBTQ Americans are our friends, our neighbors, our family members and our coworkers. When it comes to being able to earn a living, having a place to live, or being served by a business or government office, LGBTQ people should be treated like everyone else. Excluding people from civil protections based on who they are or whom they love hurts us all.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION

§ As people of faith, we believe it is possible to both protect LGBTQ people from unjust discrimination and uphold freedom of religion.

§ We all agree that freedom of religion is one of our most cherished and fundamental rights as Americans. That's why it is protected in the U.S. Constitution. However, that freedom does not give any of us the right to harm or discriminate against others, and people of faith understand that.

§ We all respect every American's right to freedom of religion—it's a sacred right that we will always fight for. However, carving out dangerously broad religious exemptions only encourages people to pick and choose which laws they're going to follow. This introduces uncertainty into and invites abuse of all of our nation's nondiscrimination laws.