



## **SENATE INTRODUCES EMPLOYMENT NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT**

### **Statement from Sharon Stapel, Executive Director, New York City Anti-Violence Project**

The New York City Anti-Violence Project applauds Senators Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Susan Collins (R-ME), Edward Kennedy (D-MA) and Olympia Snowe (R-ME) for introducing the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). This bill would extend federal protection against employment discrimination to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer people.

Protection from employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity is vital to the equality of LGBT people. We know too well the harassment and violence that people suffer in their jobs when they are not protected. This law will allow employees who are discriminated against because they are LGBT the lawful protection that they deserve. This is an important step toward ending discrimination and achieving equality.

This type of protection not only allows individual workers to be safe from discrimination in their jobs but also sends a message that discrimination against LGBT people will not be tolerated. We know that discrimination is at the root of hate motivated violence against LGBT communities and that current federal policies, including employment discrimination, legalize this discrimination. These federal policies justify hatred against LGBT people and perpetuate a message that we are unworthy of equal treatment. This environment condones those oppositional voices who would deny LGBT people equal rights. Extending federal employment discrimination protection to LGBT people will send a national message that we will not tolerate discrimination and violence against LGBT communities.

**Take Action! Please urge your Senator to pass ENDA. Call (202) 224-3121 and ask to speak with your Senator.**