

## **Task Force Action Fund Applauds Congress for Today's Historic Hearing on Transgender Discrimination in the Workplace**

June 27, 2008

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund applauds the House of Representatives for holding its first-ever hearing today on transgender discrimination in the workplace. In addition to submitting written testimony documenting the urgent need for inclusion of gender identity in federal employment protection, the Action Fund has worked closely with the National Center for Transgender Equality (NCTE) to prepare for the hearing.

Several studies have shown widespread employment discrimination against transgender people, as documented in the Action Fund's written testimony. Later this summer, the Task Force Policy Institute will be adding to the existing body of research with the launch of the largest-ever study of transgender people's experiences of discrimination in their daily lives, including within the workplace.

### **Statement by Rea Carey, Executive Director National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund**

"Discrimination against transgender people is pervasive and current laws and employer policies are insufficient to protect their rights. For far too long, transgender people have lived with the fear of losing their job simply because of who they are. Today's hearing marks a critical step in addressing this travesty once and for all.

"We applaud the House Subcommittee on Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions for holding today's hearing, and we urge lawmakers to pass federal employment protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity."

### **Task Force is a leader on transgender rights**

In preparation for today's hearing, the Task Force Action Fund and the National Center for Transgender Equality have provided to relevant congressional staff fact sheets covering the state and local nondiscrimination laws in their districts, employer nondiscrimination policies, data on employment discrimination and stories of discrimination from their respective states. The Task Force, NCTE, ACLU and the National Center for Lesbian Rights also worked with the transgender-identified witnesses to develop their testimony, go over potential questions that may be asked at the hearing and to prepare them for this historic day.

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund has been a leader in the fight to secure the rights of transgender people since 1999, when the organization vowed to oppose federal employment nondiscrimination legislation that failed to include gender identity.

The Task Force has remained steadfast and partnered with transgender, lesbian, gay, bisexual and allied activists and organizations to defend and secure transgender-inclusive legislation on the local, state and federal level.

In 2001, the Task Force established its Transgender Civil Rights Project, a groundbreaking project that provides legislative, policy and strategy assistance to activists and organizations around the country working to pass transgender-inclusive laws and policies. In April 2008, the Task Force and the National Center for Transgender Equality produced *Opening the Door to Transgender-Inclusion*, a “how-to” guide for organizations seeking to become fully transgender-inclusive.