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Dear Representative,

I am writing on behalf of the 90,000 members and supporters of the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) to urge you to vote for HR 5, the Equality Act, and against any motion to recommit (MTR) the bill. NCJW is committed to the enactment, enforcement, and preservation of laws and regulations that protect civil rights and individual liberties for all. We are inspired by the Jewish value of *b'tzelem Elohim*, that all are created in the divine image.

The Equality Act would ensure that people nationwide understand that discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) people violates federal law by adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the list of identities protected under the Civil Rights Act. The bill would also expand protections for women in public accommodations and federal funding, two areas not currently covered by existing federal civil rights law.

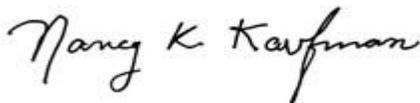
A majority of LGBTQ Americans have experienced harassment or discrimination due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. Discrimination happens in the spheres of employment, education, housing, public accommodations, and health care — every part of a person's life.

LGBTQ people are integral to the fabric of our nation. Though many federal courts have ruled that anti-LGBTQ discrimination is a form of sex discrimination that violates federal law, the administration is working to overturn these rulings and redefine federal sex discrimination through regulation. In the face of these efforts, Congress must confirm and make these protections permanent.

The Equality Act provides important clarity and explicit protections from discrimination. The bill is not about punishing religious belief, but rather, about generally applicable laws that apply to public life. These civil rights protections go hand in hand with religious freedom. We work for LGBTQ equality and inclusion not in spite of our religious beliefs, but because of them.

All people deserve to live lives free from discrimination and fear regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Later this week, we ask you to vote against any motion to recommit and for final passage of the Equality Act. If you have any questions, please reach out to Faith Williams at fwilliams@nciw.org or 202-375-5063.

Sincerely,



Nancy K. Kaufman
CEO
National Council of Jewish Women