



## Let's Make It Clear! Support House Bill 1722 The Transgender Civil Rights Bill

**Massachusetts civil rights laws were passed to protect individuals against discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability.**

**House Bill 1722 would make it clear that discrimination on the basis of an individual's "gender identity or expression"\* also violates those state civil rights laws.**

- Transgender students will be protected from discrimination in public schools.
- The Massachusetts laws forbidding discrimination in employment, housing, and credit and in places of public accommodation will explicitly apply to transgender individuals.
- Transgender people will have the same rights as others to bring complaints to the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD), to have that agency evaluate and hear their claims, and to bring their claims to court.
- The MCAD's advisory boards will be encouraged to include transgender members, just as diverse representation from various communities and businesses is encouraged under current law.
- The Governor's Commission on Gay and Lesbian Youth will become a more inclusive Commission on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth.
- Assaults and property damage crimes intended to intimidate individuals because of their race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability will be punished in a like manner when they are committed with the intent to intimidate an individual because of gender identity or expression. The State Police, who have responsibility now for keeping records and making reports concerning crimes motivated by bigotry or bias, will add crimes because of gender identity or expression to those records and reports.
- Sex-segregated accommodations will continue to be available, as they are now, consistent with a person's own gender identity or expression.

**In 1989, Massachusetts passed Ch. 516, "An Act Making It Unlawful to Discriminate on the Basis of Sexual Orientation," making clear that our Commonwealth's basic civil rights laws protect gay men and lesbians. Since then, 14 states have passed or amended their state anti-discrimination laws to protect gay and lesbian rights *and have included transgender rights*. Minnesota (1993); Rhode Island (2001); California and New Mexico (2003); Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, and Washington, DC (2005); New Jersey and Washington (2006); Colorado, Iowa, Oregon, and Vermont (2007).**

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\*"Gender identity or expression" is defined as "a gender-related identity, appearance, expression, or behavior of an individual regardless of the individual's assigned sex at birth."