

Idaho has no state or federal protections for people who are fired because of their sexual-orientation or gender identity.

What Would the Idaho Human Rights Act Amendment do?

- Include the terms “sexual orientation and gender identity” in Idaho’s Human Rights Act empowering the Idaho Human Rights Commission to investigate, mediate and seek resolution to complaints of discrimination in employment, housing, education and public accommodation.
- The Idaho Human Rights Act was passed in 1969 protecting Idahoans from discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, national origin; and age. Protections on the basis of disability were added in 2007.
- Employers with five or more employees would be prohibited from using an individual’s sexual orientation or gender identity as the basis for employment decisions, such as hiring, firing, promotion, or compensation.

Good Business Policy

- Including sexual orientation and gender identity in the Idaho Human Rights Act is good business. Attracting and retaining the best workers is critical to containing costs in the current marketplace. Those who ensure fair treatment for all employees are at a competitive advantage as shown by the examples below.
- Training new workers is costly. Some studies put the cost of recruiting a new employee as high as \$75,000.
- More than half the Fortune 500 Companies now include the terms sexual orientation and or gender identity in their employment policies.
- Employees should be judged on job performance. Written non-discrimination policies improve inclusiveness and increase productivity by alleviating personal stress that keeps employees from fully focusing on work.
- A March 2000 Newsweek poll states "83 per cent of Americans say workers deserve job protection regardless of sexual orientation."
- A 2006 Statewide BSU Public Policy Survey found that 63 per cent of Idahoans and a majority in every region of the state and both political parties think it should be illegal to fire someone because they are or are perceived to be gay.

According To Those Who Know . . .

"I support the Employment Non-Discrimination Act because I believe that freedom and justice cannot be parceled out in pieces to suit political convenience. As my husband, Martin Luther King Jr. said, 'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.' Like Martin, I don't believe you can stand for freedom for one group of people and deny it to others." —Coretta Scott King

"It has been the law of the land that employment discrimination is unacceptable based on race, gender, religion, ethnic origin or other non-performance-related considerations. It is time to include sexual orientation. It is the right thing to do; it is the sensible thing to do. It is also the businesslike thing to do." —Warren Phillips, Former Chairman, Dow Jones & Company