



Honorable Rep. Jonathan Kreiss-Tomkins, Co-Chairperson
Honorable Rep. Zack Fields, Co-Chairperson
House State Affairs Committee
Alaska state Legislature

Thank you for sponsoring HB82, which seeks to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public accommodations based on sexual orientation and gender identity/ expression. Your commitment to this important issue is appreciated. I would like to take this opportunity to express Identity Inc.'s support for H8 82.

Identity Inc. is a statewide LGBTQ organization that works to advance the lives of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Alaskans. We envision a world where all Alaskans can be their authentic self and still feel safe, supported and welcomed in their community. Alaska is an expansive state-much of which is lacking resources and support for LGBTQ people-and as a result, many in our community face isolation and fear for their safety.

It is Identity Inc. 's hope that this legislature will take action to create a more inclusive and welcoming Alaska for the following reasons:

- Equality is good for business. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of Fortune 500 companies prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and nearly 6 in 1 0 prohibit discrimination based on gender identity. Changing our laws to reflect our values will help Alaska attract and retain the best and the brightest in the workforce.
- All hardworking people-including those who are gay or transgender-should be treated fairly and equally by the laws of our state. All Alaskans should have the opportunity to earn a living to provide for themselves and their families.
- Updating the law will ensure that all people in our state are judged on their job performance and qualifications. Nothing more, nothing less. No one should have to live in fear of being legally fired for reasons that have nothing to do with job performance.
- There is broad-based support, including from within the business community, for creating a more inclusive Alaska. Locally in Anchorage, Identity Inc. is partnering with Pride Foundation, the Anchorage Chamber of Commerce and the Anchorage Economic Development Corporation to recognize local businesses that have policies and practices supporting LGBT inclusion.

Again, and again, people are surprised to learn that discrimination against gay and transgender people is still legal in Alaska. Unfortunately, there are people who will only treat others fairly if the law requires it, and so we need these protections for those times when good judgment breaks down. We can all agree that people deserve to be treated fairly, and that it's not for any of us to judge. We strongly urge you to pass HB 82.

Together, we can protect all Alaska families and ensure that we stand on the right side of history.

Sincerely,
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