

# Fortunate Families



voices for justice

sharing our stories

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2009-10

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## AN OPEN LETTER TO: U.S. SENATORS AND CONGRESSPERSONS

You recently received a letter from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) expressing their concerns with the passage of the Employment Nondiscrimination Act (ENDA). We have attached the USCCB letter with our comments inserted to help you understand how their statements are misleading, inappropriate, and not representative of our personal experience as parents of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) children, nor of our many years of ministry with Catholic parents and families of LGBT persons.

You will note that the bishops repeatedly return to the themes of sexual conduct, same-sex marriage, and supposed threats to religious liberty. Rather than argue these particular themes, we limit our comments to the points addressed in the ENDA legislation at issue.

Our key points are:

- ENDA affirms the right to not be discriminated against because of who one is (not on what one does).
- ENDA has nothing to do with anyone's sexual conduct or marriage of any kind.
- ENDA exempts religious organizations from its provisions.

As faithful Catholics, we fully support ENDA legislation. In fact, we believe we are morally obligated to support it, and ask that you vote to pass this bill which is focused on and so critical for the well-being of all LGBT persons. **We urge you to pass ENDA legislation so that all our children will have protection from workplace discrimination.**

Sincerely,

Casey Lopata, President

On behalf of the Fortunate Families Board of Directors:

Ann Franczyk  
Jerry Furlong

Michael Harmuth  
Mary Ellen Lopata

Linda Karle Nelson  
Tom Nelson

Myrna Ohmann  
Deb Word

Fortunate Families is a national organization that ministers primarily with Catholic parents of LGBT persons. We encourage Catholic parents to explore and value their stories, and to share them with their family circle, their faith community and the larger society. We believe these stories can improve the climate in the Catholic Church and society for our LGBT daughters and sons. In short, we advocate for justice in our Church and society for our LGBT children.

## Fortunate Families

Catholic Families fostering respect, friendship and justice for their lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender loved ones.

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