

**DECLARATION OF RELIGIOUS AND FAITH-BASED SUPPORT FOR
MASSACHUSETTS HOUSE BILL 1722,
AN ACT RELATIVE TO GENDER-BASED DISCRIMINATION AND HATE CRIMES**

DRAFTED BY THE INTERFAITH COALITION FOR TRANSGENDER EQUALITY

AFFIRMING A MORAL VISION

No society is truly just when its members face persecution. Justice requires that a society stand by its moral vision and act against that persecution. The signatories of this letter ask that the Commonwealth act upon its moral vision of a just society by passing House Bill (HB) 1722.

The signatories of this letter are persons of faith, clergy, congregations, and organizations of faith. Some of us are transgender persons. Others are allies and loved ones. Some of us directly serve the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community. Others serve indirectly. *In our support for HB 1722 we speak with one voice. We speak on behalf of those who are vulnerable to violence and persecution because of their gender identities or gender expressions.*

Transgender people and others who do not conform to gender stereotypes face persecution in essential areas of life. HB 1722 adds "gender identity or expression" to the Commonwealth's hate crime laws and non-discrimination laws in the areas of employment, housing, public accommodations, public education, and credit. Violence and persecution on the basis of gender identity or expression often stem from the belief that people who do not conform to gender stereotypes are unworthy of protection by the law and are outside of the Commonwealth's moral vision. By passing HB 1722, the legislature would speak out against such persecution.

OUR CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

People of all gender identities and expressions, including transgender people, are born into, enter into, or are called to many faiths. Our faith traditions help to ground and support us in our lifelong quests for fulfillment and responsibility to one another. All of our traditions respect the dignity of each and every human being and recognize our connection to one another.

Because of this connection, the persecution of a person on the basis of gender identity or expression is an injury, not only to an individual, but to everyone connected to that person: to the person's family, friends, and spiritual community. *The oppression of one person indelibly scars all of us. It calls all of us to take account of our moral duties, stand in unity, and take action.*

We ask that our legislators support HB 1722.

Congregational and organizational signers are listed in italics. Signers to this declaration as of April 30, 2008.

American Baptist

Rev. Nancy Hitt

Episcopal

Christ Episcopal Church, Somerville

Rev. Anne Bonnyman
Rev. Julia Dunbar
Rev. Christopher J. Fike
Rev. Francis Fornaro
Rev. Anne C. Fowler
Rev. Miriam C. Gelfer
Rev. Dr. Ted Gaiser
Rev. Gretchen S. Grimshaw
Rev. Robert E. Hensley
Rev. Dr. Gale Davis Morris
Rev. Cameron Partridge
Rev. Dr. William W. Rich
Rev. Timothy J. Rogers
Rev. Bonnie Sarah Spencer
Rev. Deborah M. Warner
Rev. George H. Welles, Jr.

Jewish

Boston Workmen's Circle

Congregation Am Tikva

Congregation Dorshei Tzedek

Congregation Eitz Chayim

Keshet

Jewish Alliance for Law and Social

Action (JALSA)

Temple Emanu-El

Rabbi Katy Allen
Rabbi Thomas Alpert
Rabbi Joel A. Alter
Rabbi Stephen Arnold
Rabbi Howard A. Berman
Rabbi Braham David
Rabbi Paula Feldstein
Rabbi Ronne Friedman
Rabbi Neal Gold
Rabbi Jeffrey Goldwasser
Rabbi Jonathan Kraus
Rabbi Shira H. Joseph
Rabbi Daniel Judson
Rabbi Stephanie D. Kolin
Rabbi Ira L. Korinow
Rabbi Michele Lenke

Rabbi Lee B. Levin
Rabbi David L. Kline
Rabbi Cherie E. Koller-Fox
Rabbi Devon A. Lerner
Rabbi Elias Lieberman
Rabbi Joseph B. Meszler
Rabbi Steven P. Nathan
Rabbi David Paskin
Rabbi Michelle Pearlman
Rabbi Jay Perlman
Rabbi Victor Reinstein
Rabbi Rachel Schoenfeld
Rabbi Toba Spitzer
Rabbi Andrew D. Vogel
Rabbi Moshe Waldoks
Rabbi Elyse Wechterman
Rabbi David S. Widzer
Rabbi Jeffrey Wildstein
Rabbi Deborah Zecher
Rabbi Elaine Zecher
Rabbi Henry A. Zoob

Continued ...

Lutheran

Rev. Nathan D. Piphon

Metropolitan Community Churches

MCC of Boston

Rev. Michael C. Cooper
Rev. Elder Diane Fisher
Rev. George McDermott
Rev. Jim Merritt
Rev. Joan Saniuk

Presbyterian

First Presbyterian Church of Waltham

Elder Vickie Boisseau
Rev. Jean Southard

United Church of Christ

Rev. Dr. Jim Antal
Rev. Quinn Caldwell
Rev. Anne B. Day
Rev. Michael McSherry
Deacon Mark Meehl
Rev. Anne M. Rousseau
Rev. Dr. Nancy S. Taylor
Rev. Dr. Peter Wells

United Methodist

Cambridge Welcoming Ministries

Rev. Sean Delmore
Rev. Linda Grenfell
Rev. Susan Morrison
Rev. Gary F. Nettleton
Rev. Jeremy Smith
Rev. Tiffany Steinwert

Unitarian Universalist

Rev. Hank Peirce
Rev. William P. Zelazny

Organizations

Dignity Boston

*Trans Student Alliance of Hampshire
College*

The Womyn's Village

**Lay Persons of Faith,
Comprising Many Faiths**

Robyn Adelman
Rebecca Aine
Chelsea L. Amato
Julia Appel
Julie Aronowitz
Hanna Bao
Margaret Barusch
Yael Bat-Shimon
Jasmine Beach-Ferrara
Susanne Beeber
Catherine Bell
Joseph Berman
Sandra Bernstein
Brian Besser
Lani Blechman
Rosa Blumenfeld
Denise Boruillet
Barbara Boucher
James Boucher
Ann Brown
Angela Buonopane
Keli Busey
Michael Burggren
Kathie Carpenter

Roberta Carson
Jim Casarjian-Perry
Michelle Clapp
Andrew Cohen
Nadia Cohen
Dr. Alex Coleman
Kari Collins
Will Corrdin
Stephen J. Couto, Jr.
Sharon Crumrine
Steven Davis
Sam Dreyfus
Sheila Decter
Judi Ehrlich
Ellen Fishman
Jenifer Firestone
Melika M. Fitzhugh
Richard Frank
Marcia Garber
Jen Garfield
Stacie Garnett
Sarah Gershuny
Jeremie Giacoia
Cara Gilbert
Robyn Giragosian
Stuart Glass
Phyllis Glazerman
Diana Fisher Gombert
Will Green
Marilyn Greenberg
Trevanna Grenfell
Daniel Grenfell-Lee
Tallessyn Grenfell-Lee
Eric Grenfell-Muir
Edmund Grogan
Jayne K. Guberman
Tamar Grimm
Leonard Haley
Terry Hall
Dee Halzack
Christopher Hannon
Trey Harrison
Ben Healey
Rebecca Herst
Mycroft Masada Holmes
Dr. Andrea Jacobs
Orly Jacobovits
Milicent Johnson
Richard M. Juang
Asher Kaboth
Kristy Kade
Irena Karasik
Judith Kates
Howard Katz
Michelle Kellaway
Elana Kieffer
Nancy Kieran
Louise Kittredge
Idit Klein
Judith Klein
Heather Klish
Gracie Knowles
Yael Langer
Penelope Larson
Ethan Levine
David Levy
Thomas Lewis

Stephanie Lowitt
Vanessa Lyndon
Hilary Lustick
Marla Marcum
Lisa McNeill
Charlie Melkonian
Zeb Michelson
Suzanna Morrison
Julia Moskowitz
Federico Murara
James Nadeau
Michael Naughton
Dr. Wendy Nelson
Rachel Neuman
Robert Newell
Meredith Nichols
Julian Padilla
Chelsea Paxton
Carrie Pericola
Christina Pienta
Ren Pilinger
Joseph Pushkin-Rood
Desmond Ravenstone
Faye C. Reed
Mick Rehrig
Virginia Remedi-Brown
Catherine Reuben
Mark Rimbach
Jeanne Rintell
Robyn S. Robbins
Martha Roberts
Mark Roderick
Steven Rodick
Timothy J. Rogers
Jessica Rosenthal
Gilana Rosenthol
Ellen Rottersmann
Sabrina Santiago
Clay Sato
Dr. Lisa Schneier
Lesley Schoenfeld
Enid A. Shapiro
Susan L. Shevitz
Alison Shriberg
Caren Silverlieb
Debra Singer
Hadley Smith
Jessica Solomon
Willie Sordillo
Erin Spiller
Esther David Steffens
Joseph Takarewski
Sarah Tasman
James Taylor
Max Tandler
Rebecca Tracey
Zipora Urbach
Kirk Van Gilder
Aliza Wasserman
Tom Walsh
Denise Weaver
Liz Weber
Laurie Wolfe
Patricia Zagarella
William Zarnoch

Contact information for all persons and organizations are on file with the Interfaith Coalition for Transgender Equality (ICTE). The ICTE can be contacted through: Orly Jacobovits, Keshet, orly@keshetonline.org (617) 524-9227 or Richard M. Juang, interfaithcoalition@gmail.com

ICTE was founded in 2007. Its efforts are guided by Orly Jacobovits and Idit Klein of Keshet, Richard M. Juang of the Committee for Transgender Inclusion of the MLGBA, Rev. Cameron Partridge of St. Luke's and St. Margaret's Episcopal Church, Rev. Michael Cooper and Robyn S. Robbins of MCC Boston, and Mycroft Holmes of Keshet's Transgender Working Group. ICTE supports HB 1722 and education on transgender issues. All faiths are welcome.

www.interfaithcoalition.org