

# HAVE YOU WRITTEN TO YOUR CONGRESSMAN ABOUT H.R. 5452 YET?

Twenty-four sponsors introduced a gay rights bill into Congress on March 25, and the National Gay Task Force simultaneously launched the first nationally coordinated gay lobbying effort in history.

The bill, HR 5452, would amend the 1964 and 1968 Civil Rights Acts to prohibit discrimination, based on a person's "affectional or sexual preference," in the areas of employment, housing, public accommodations and facilities, education, and federally funded programs.

First introduced as HR 166 in January by Rep. Bella Abzug (D-NY) and four cosponsors, the bill was circulated by Abzug among her colleagues in the House of Representatives for additional support.

Working closely with the Abzug office, NGTF contacted potential sponsors directly and relayed information to and from gay groups in several states. Key roles were played by lesbians and gay men in Northern California, Minnesota, Massachusetts, Denver, Washington DC, Philadelphia, and New York City. The result is a geographically diverse list of sponsors (see box).

## Honor Roll

The 24 Representatives cosponsoring HR 5452 are:

Bella Abzug (D-NY), Herman Badillo (D-NY), Jonathan Bingham (D-NY), George Brown (D-Cal), John Burton (D-Cal), Shirley Chisholm (D-NY), Ronald Dellums (D-Cal), Walter Fauntroy (D-Wash DC), Donald Fraser (D-Minn), Michael Harrington (D-Mass), Elizabeth Holtzman (D-NY), Edward Koch (D-NY), Paul McCloskey, Jr (R-Cal), Norman Mineta (D-Cal), Parren Mitchell (D-Md), Robert Nix (D-Pa), Charles Rangel (D-NY), Fred Richmond (D-NY), Benjamin Rosenthal (D-NY), Patricia Schroeder (D-Colo), Steve Solarz (D-NY), Pete Stark (D-Cal), Gerry Studds (D-Mass), H. A. Waxman (D-Cal).

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## WHAT YOU CAN DO

To help secure passage of the federal bill:

Write to your Representative and urge her/his support for HR 5452. Write to Rep. Don Edwards (D-Cal), chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights and ask him to hold public hearings on the bill.

Write to your Senators and ask them to sponsor and support Senate legislation paralleling HR 5452.

Send us copies of the replies you get. With feedback from you, we can get a picture of how we stand nationally and construct a strategy accordingly.

If you are involved in electoral politics or in the gay or feminist movements and can work on the bill in your city or state, contact Nath Rockhill at NGTF with details. We guarantee absolute discretion to people who can provide us with firsthand insight into Congress.