



## KENTUCKY NEEDS A STATEWIDE FAIRNESS LAW

In most of Kentucky, folks can get fired, denied rental or sale of housing, turned away from a restaurant, or refused credit simply on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity or expression. Last year alone the Kentucky Fairness Alliance received more than a dozen reports of discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression. Most notoriously, dean's list student Jason Johnson was expelled from the University of the Cumberlands for posting comments about his boyfriend on the Internet.

In April 2006 Gov. Ernie Fletcher signed an Executive Order stripping lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender state employees of previously established job protections. Adding insult to injury, he did so on "Diversity Day."

The Kentucky Fairness Alliance **supports a Statewide Fairness Law** as a way to right these injustices, and to protect all Kentuckians against discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and credit.

### TALKING POINTS

- The statewide Fairness law will restore the job protections Fletcher's Executive Order took away. Getting them through the legislature means no future governor will have the power to erase them with a mere pen stroke.
- Discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity and expression is real.
  - KFA received **more than a dozen discrimination reports** in 2006 alone.
  - Jason Johnson's expulsion from the University of the Cumberlands is just the most visible.
- Outside Louisville, Lexington, and Covington you have no legal recourse if your sexual orientation or gender identity or expression costs you a job, a home, or a seat in a restaurant.
- **Nearly three-quarters (74%)** of Kentucky voters say it should be illegal to fire someone based on sexual orientation (Decision Research, 1999).
- Nationally, **nearly 9 out of 10 Americans** said in a May 2005 Gallup poll that they support equal opportunities for gays and lesbians in the workplace (Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation).
- Fairness laws currently exist in 17 states plus the District of Columbia. (Human Rights Campaign).
- Business leaders support non-discrimination laws as a way to encourage a diverse and talented workforce.
  - More than 92% of the FORTUNE 500 companies have adopted nondiscrimination policies that include sexual orientation (Equality Forum).
  - In Kentucky, 100% of our FORTUNE 500 employers offer discrimination protection (Ashland, Humana, Kindred Healthcare, Lexmark, Omnicare, and Yum Brands).
- The statewide fairness law would protect *everyone* from discrimination based on actual and perceived sexual orientation and gender identity.