

Congressman Rothman's Statement on the Occasion of Pride Month 2011

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Washington, DC – Representative Steve Rothman (D-NJ) released the following statement:

This month I join with millions of Americans to celebrate Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) Pride Month. This month marks the 42nd Anniversary of the Stonewall Riots which sparked the modern LGBT movement in New York City on June 28, 1969. At the time, police raids on bars catering to LGBT patrons were common, but that night, the patrons of the Stonewall Inn fought back heroically. The response of the Stonewall patrons ignited a national firestorm of activism that brought new visibility to the struggle for LGBT equality and continues to fuel the movement today.

I am proud to stand with the LGBT community as an ally for equal treatment under the law for all regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. I believe that the LGBT community has the right to employment without discrimination, marriage, adoption, and any other freedom that their heterosexual counterparts enjoy in our nation. Last year I was proud to vote in favor of ending the discriminatory policy known as "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" in our nation's military. This paramount victory for equality will bring to an end a failed policy that unfairly denies fundamental civil liberties to highly qualified individuals solely based on their sexual orientation. The repeal of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" will also improve the U.S. military's ability to retain the most qualified individuals to keep America safe.

Although this was an incredible step forward, we still have a long way to go to attain full equality for the LGBT members of not only our country, but of our world. LGBT people around the world continue to be targets of discrimination and live under constant threat of arrest, violence, torture and even death. The United States must continue to support the rights of LGBT individuals to lead productive and dignified lives, free from fear and violence.

This LGBT Pride Month, I encourage all Americans to reflect on the real progress our nation has made, but we must also understand that there is much more work to do. We all need to continue the march towards universal equality and never stop moving our country to fulfilling its promise of forming a "more perfect union."

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