



LGBT students reported that they had experienced harassment at their school in the past year; and

Whereas, Three-fifths felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation and about a third reported that they had skipped a day of school in the past month because of feeling unsafe; and

Whereas, This discrimination is committed by not only students but by school employees, including, in some cases, teachers; and

Whereas, Discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity contributes to high rates of absenteeism, higher dropout rates, academic underachievement and poor physical and mental health; and

Whereas, Discrimination can include bullying, harassment, intimidation and violence and is harmful to the well-being of students who are being victimized; and

Whereas, Nationwide, six students have taken their own lives as a result of having endured antigay harassment and bullying since the beginning of the current school year; and

Whereas, While current federal law offers protection from discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, disability and national origin, these statutes do not include sexual orientation or gender identity; and

Whereas, In March of 2011, H.R.998/S.555, also known as the Student Non-Discrimination Act of 2011 (SNDA), was introduced in both Houses of the United States Congress; and

Whereas, The SNDA would prohibit discrimination against any public school student on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity; and

Whereas, The SNDA is widely supported by numerous human rights organizations and currently has 137 co-sponsors in the House and 33 in the Senate; and

Whereas, The SNDA would help to ensure that all students have access to a safe and secure educational environment; and

Whereas, It is imperative that we as a country take a stand on this far too pervasive discrimination; and

Whereas, Bullying, harassment and discrimination have no place in schools and such behavior deprives

children of the education they are entitled to and violates their rights as human beings; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the United States Congress to pass the Student Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 998/S.555).

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6/6/11