



National Association of Social Workers

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DATE: April 26, 2012
TO: Senate Judicial Committee
RE: In Support of S - 2488

The National Association of Social Workers (NASW - RI) is in full support of expanding Rhode Island General Laws in chapter 42-28 to include “gender identify or expression”. This is necessary because the definition is not well known and discrimination and crimes of violence are committed against this group specifically due to their identity as a group.

You have heard plenty of testimony on facts related to this bill tonight. Below are principles of NASW - RI that relate to this legislation.

- The Social Work profession advocates and supports the rights of minority groups living within our borders, including those who are not well understood in our society.
- NASW-RI appreciates diversity in our society and believe differences should be embraced in all walks of life.
- **NASW - RI also believes that discrimination and prejudice directed against any individual on the basis of gender identification or expression, whether real or perceived, are damaging to the social, emotional, psychological, physical and economic well-being of the individual and our community.**

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Harris, LICSW
Executive Director