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## **House Members Form LGBT Equality Caucus**

### ***Goal is Equality for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) Americans***

In a Capitol Hill press conference today, Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Congressman Barney Frank (D-MA) announced the formation of the House of Representatives LGBT Equality Caucus. Baldwin introduced the bipartisan caucus and its founding members saying, “We represent different races, different genders, different sexual orientations, different geographic regions, different generations, and different parties, but we share a common mission: to promote lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) equality.”

Congressman Barney Frank, who is co-chairing the caucus with Baldwin said, “With a Democratic majority in the House, we now have both the opportunity and the responsibility to move towards legal equality for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender. This caucus will play an important role in helping shape the strategy by which we do this.”

The mission of the LGBT Equality Caucus is to achieve the extension of equal rights, the repeal of discriminatory laws, the elimination of hate-motivated violence, and the improved health and well being for all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.

The Caucus will serve as a resource for Members of Congress, their staffs, and the public on LGBT issues. Congressional action this session on legislation combating hate crimes and employment discrimination based highlighted the need, and the desire people had, for more information on LGBT issues. The LGBT Equality Caucus is one result of those successful efforts.

Baldwin described the purpose of the Caucus as both symbolic and substantive, “...symbolic because, historically, of all the Member caucuses organized in the Congress over the years, none has ever been dedicated to equality for LGBT Americans. The very existence of an LGBT Equality Caucus in Congress makes a strong statement about the values this Congress and this nation hold dear.”

The Caucus will address not only U.S. domestic policies, but our nation’s foreign policy to safeguard the human rights of LGBT people in all parts of the world.

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At its founding today, the Equality Caucus is comprised of the following Members with more expected to join in the coming months:

**Co-Chairs:** Reps. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Barney Frank (D-MA)

**Vice Chairs:** Reps. Rob Andrews (D-NJ), Xavier Becerra (D-CA) Lois Capps (D-CA), Yvette Clarke (D-NY), Joseph Crowley (D-NY), Diana DeGette (D-CO), Keith Ellison (D-MN), Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ), Mike Honda (D-CA), Barbara Lee (D-CA), James McGovern (D-MA), Jerry Nadler (D-NY), Linda Sánchez (D-CA), Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Hilda Solis (D-CA), Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL), Henry Waxman (D-CA), Anthony Weiner (D-NY), Peter Welch (D-VT)

**Members:** Reps. Howard Berman (D-CA), Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), Robert Brady (D-PA), Michael Capuano (D-MA), Susan Davis (D-CA), Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), Eliot Engel (D-NY), Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Luis Gutierrez (D-IL), Phil Hare (D-IL), Rush Holt (D-NJ), Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX), Eddie Bernice Johnson (D-TX), Patrick Kennedy (D-RI), Dennis Kucinich (D-OH), Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), Carolyn Maloney (D-NY), Doris Matsui (D-CA), James Moran (D-VA), Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC), Frank Pallone (D-NJ), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), Steven Rothman (D-NJ), José Serrano (D-NY), Chris Shays (R-CT), Pete Stark (D-CA), Betty Sutton (D-OH), Ellen Tauscher (D-CA), Niki Tsongas (D-MA), Robert Wexler (D-FL), Lynn Woolsey (D-CA)

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