



Alan Khazei's Approach to BIG CITIZENSHIP:  
A Blueprint for American Policy

## **Equality for Members of the LGBT Community**

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Paid for by Citizens for Alan Khazei

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## **Equality for Members of the LGBT Community**

*Alan is an incredibly strong supporter of equal rights for all citizens. At City Year, he hired LGBT individuals into the highest levels of the organization, and City Year's very diverse corps has always included many people from the LGBT community. As Senator, Alan will work hard to ensure that Massachusetts remains on the right side of history, and that all LGBT Americans win the right to marry whom they choose, adopt children, and receive the equal benefits and equal wages that they deserve.*

### **Guiding Principles**

- All Americans, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, are entitled to equal rights.
- Discrimination against LGBT Americans is not only wrong, but makes our country less secure, less prosperous, and less free.
- Gender identity and expression deserve the same protections as sexual orientation.

### **Key Facts**

- More than 9,000 service members have been discharged under the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.
- In 29 states, employers can legally discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. Similarly, 38 states allow discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression.
- Law enforcement agencies reported more than 1,400 hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation in 2007.

## **Alan's Support of Policies for Bringing Equal Rights to LGBT Community**

### ***Don't Ask, Don't Tell***

Over 60,000 LGBT Americans risk their lives for the cause of freedom around the globe, yet "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" does not allow these 60,000 patriots to serve our country openly, thereby undermining both our security and our democracy. Alan knows that together, we can fight to end this policy.

## ***Non-discrimination in Employment***

At a time when Americans are struggling to find or keep a job, it is outrageous that in dozens of states, it is perfectly legal to fire—or refuse to hire—members of the LGBT community. Alan will fight for a trans-inclusive ENDA so that all American workers are judged on their merits, rather than their identity.

## ***Hate Crimes***

In addition to being protected in the workplace, LGBT Americans should be able to feel safe wherever they go. Alan applauds the recent passage of hate crimes legislation that finally addresses crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Critically, this legislation will give states and municipalities greater assistance in identifying and prosecuting hate crimes so that all levels of government can be effective in combating such activity.

Alan is a strong supporter of An Act Relative to Gender-Based Discrimination and Hate Crimes—now being considered in the Statehouse—which will explicitly prohibit discrimination based on gender identity or expression and amend hate crime statutes to include these characteristics. Massachusetts has been a national leader on LGBT issues, and we need to continue to vigorously protect the rights of our LGBT citizens.

## ***Equal Marriage and Partnership Rights***

Although Massachusetts was the first state to recognize same-sex marriage, same-sex couples in our state still lack equal rights. We must repeal Defense of Marriage Act and give committed same-sex couples access to the same federal benefits that other married couples enjoy. Alan also supports the Uniting American Families Act, which will end official discrimination against same-sex couples by allowing the permanent partners of Americans to obtain permanent resident status.

## ***LGBT Youth***

Perhaps the most vulnerable members of the LGBT community are our LGBT youth. The bullying, harassment, and discrimination many LGBT students face—perpetrated not only by their peers, but also by adult authority figures—is unacceptable. Alan strongly supports gay-straight alliances, diversity programs, and other efforts to build fully inclusive communities for LGBT youth.

## ***A Lasting Partnership***

Alan doesn't just talk about LGBT rights in front of LGBT audiences—it is a consistent part of his message of change. Alan sees his role as Senator as working closely with movement leaders and active citizens to build broad-based support for LGBT rights. It was through coalition-building that he was able to lead the movement that saved AmeriCorps from severe budget cuts, and to play a key role in crafting and passing the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the largest expansion of national service since the New Deal. His proven record of organizing for change and the passion and commitment of the LGBT community will make for a powerful alliance.