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June 28, 2019

The Honorable Jeff Merkley
United States Senate
313 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan M. Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States Senate
709 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Cory Booker
United States Senate
717 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Merkley, Collins, Baldwin and Booker:

On behalf of our 38 million members and all older Americans nationwide, AARP is writing to endorse S. 788, the Equality Act. All people have the fundamental right to be free from discrimination. The Equality Act provides equal treatment under the law for LGBT individuals, by prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, housing, public accommodations, public education, federal funding, credit, and the jury system.

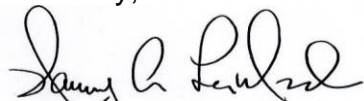
LGBT discrimination is an aging issue that has threatened the health, financial security, and personal fulfillment of too many 50-plus older adults. LGBT individuals should not face discrimination from the entities that 50-plus adults traditionally rely upon for support, such as healthcare institutions, housing centers, meal providers, senior centers, and other vital government services. According to AARP's landmark national LGBT research study, "Maintaining Dignity" (2018), 34 percent of LGBT older adults are concerned that they will have to hide their identity in order to have access to suitable housing as they age. Over 75 percent of respondents are concerned about having adequate family or social supports to rely on as they age. Too many LGBT seniors are isolated because they are less likely to have adult children to look out for them. They are also more likely to have lost a significant part of their social network during the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Civil rights and equal opportunity in employment, housing, public accommodations, and government services are essential to foster communities where people of all ages can live and thrive without fear of prejudice and bigotry. On this historic date, which marks fifty years

Alabama | Alaska | Arizona | Arkansas | California | Colorado | Connecticut | Delaware | District of Columbia | Florida | Georgia | Hawaii | Idaho | Illinois | Indiana
Iowa | Kansas | Kentucky | Louisiana | Maine | Maryland | Massachusetts | Michigan | Minnesota | Mississippi | Missouri | Montana | Nebraska | Nevada
New Hampshire | New Jersey | New Mexico | New York | North Carolina | North Dakota | Ohio | Oklahoma | Oregon | Pennsylvania | Puerto Rico
Rhode Island | South Carolina | South Dakota | Tennessee | Texas | Utah | Vermont | Virgin Islands | Virginia | Washington | West Virginia | Wisconsin | Wyoming

of LGBT advocacy since Stonewall, AARP is pleased to support the Equality Act, and urges Senate action to better the lives of LGBT older Americans. If you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me or have your staff contact Cristina Martin Firvida at cmfirvida@aarp.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy A. LeaMond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Nancy" and last name "LeaMond" clearly distinguishable.

Nancy A. LeaMond
Executive Vice President and
Chief Advocacy and Engagement Officer