

Freedom from Discrimination in Credit Act of 2013 (FDCA)

Securing credit is critical to some of the most important undertakings in life, including buying a home, going to college, or starting a small business. Credit decisions should not be based on personal characteristics, such as race and sex, that are unrelated to creditworthiness – and our nation’s civil rights laws reflect that. However, there is no federal law that consistently protects LGBT individuals from credit discrimination, and it is still legal in many states to discriminate based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The Freedom from Discrimination in Credit Act of 2013 (FDCA) would amend the Equal Credit Opportunity Act to include sexual orientation and gender identity to the characteristics upon which discrimination is prohibited.

Why we need FDCA:

In many places, LGBT Americans can still be denied a mortgage, credit card, student loan, or many other types of credit simply because of who they are. While several states have passed laws prohibiting discrimination in credit based on sexual orientation or gender identity, there is no federal law protecting LGBT individuals from credit discrimination across the United States.

FDCA would do the following:

The Freedom from Discrimination in Credit Act of 2013 (FDCA) would amend the Equal Credit Opportunity Act (ECOA) to prohibit discrimination in the provision of credit based on sexual orientation or gender identity. FDCA simply extends the basic protections afforded under ECOA to LGBT Americans.

FDCA reflects what states are already doing:

Twelve states and the District of Columbia have already passed laws prohibiting credit discrimination generally based on sexual orientation, including Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington. Additionally, ten states and the District of Columbia prohibit discrimination in credit transactions generally based on gender identity, including Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New Mexico, Rhode Island, and Vermont. FDCA would allow all LGBT Americans to benefit from similar protections.

FDCA has been endorsed by Human Rights Campaign, National Center for Transgender Equality, National Center for Lesbian Rights, National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce, National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce, and Credit Union National Association.

To cosponsor the Freedom from Discrimination in Credit Act of 2013, please contact Jake Cornett and Megan Foster of Senator Murray’s staff at jake_cornett@murray.senate.gov and megan_foster@murray.senate.gov or Colleen Nguyen of Congressman Israel’s staff at colleen.nguyen@mail.house.gov.