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## **Equality Organizations Launch Coalition to Protect the FAIR Education Act**

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### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

San Francisco ? Led by Equality California, Gay-Straight Alliance Network and the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, a broad coalition of advocates for equality have launched a coordinated effort to protect the Fair, Accurate, Inclusive and Respectful (FAIR) Education Act and to educate the public about its impact.

The coalition includes people of faith; labor organizations; lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights groups; disability rights advocates; racial justice organizations and many other groups who care about equality.

?The movement for LGBT rights is among the most diverse social justice movements in the nation and we are proud to have that diversity represented in our coalition,? said Roland Palencia, Executive Director of Equality California. ?Working together to Protect the FAIR Education Act will ensure that students not only learn accurate information about our equality movement, but also about the roles LGBT people have played in movements and historic moments that have fundamentally shaped our nation.?

?The FAIR Education Act enables all California students to learn an honest account of history, which includes the contributions of women, people of color, LGBT people, people with disabilities, and other historically underrepresented groups,? said Gay-Straight Alliance Network Executive Director Carolyn Laub. ?This coalition is determined to protect the FAIR Education Act and stop the extremist effort to censor LGBT people and people with disabilities from history.?

?Learning the contributions made by activists of the disability rights movement is essential to a full understanding of our history, just as an understanding of the civil rights movement and the pioneers of women's suffrage and the LGBT rights movement are an essential part of our history lessons,? said Teresa Favuzzi, Executive Director of the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers. ?The FAIR Education Act truly is a step in the right direction and it's important for us to make sure that this landmark victory that promotes understanding in our schools is upheld

because it's time for our history classes and textbooks to accurately reflect the rich and diverse history of California.?

The diverse coalition to protect the FAIR Education Act includes (partial list):

ACLU San Diego  
ACLU Southern California  
Alice B. Toklas Democratic Club  
Asian Pacific Islander Equality  
API Equality LA  
Bayard Rustin LGBT Coalition  
California Council of Churches  
California Faith for Equality  
California Foundation for Independent Living Centers  
California Teachers Association  
Courage Campaign  
COLAGE  
Equal Roots  
Equality California  
Freedom to Marry  
GAPSN  
Get Equal  
GLSEN  
GSA Network  
Honor PAC  
Honor Fund  
Jordan Rustin Coalition  
LA Gay and Lesbian Center  
Latino Equality Alliance  
Love Cherish Honor  
Marriage Equality Los Angeles  
Marriage Equality Silicon Valley  
National Center for Lesbian Rights  
National Gay and Lesbian Task Force  
Orange County Equality Coalition  
Orange County Fairview Church  
Our Family Coalition  
PFLAG-San Francisco  
Progressive Interfaith Alliance of Orange County  
Sacramento Area Teachers  
San Francisco Pride SEIU  
Transgender Law Center  
Vote For Equality  
Unitarian Universalists Legislative Ministry

Signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown last month, the FAIR Education Act ensures the fair and accurate portrayal of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) civil rights movement and people with disabilities in social science instruction. Anti-equality advocates, including the Capitol Resource Institute, are circulating petitions for a referendum that asks voters to overturn the FAIR Education Act. They will need to collect over a half million signatures in order to qualify for a referendum on the June 2012 ballot.

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**Equality California** is the largest statewide lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender rights advocacy organization in California. Over the past decade, Equality California has strategically moved California from a state with extremely limited legal protections for LGBT individuals to a state with some of the most comprehensive civil rights protections in the nation. Equality California has passed more than 70 pieces of legislation and continues to advance equality through legislative advocacy, electoral work, public education and community empowerment. [www.eqca.org](http://www.eqca.org) <sup>[3]</sup>

**Gay-Straight Alliance Network** (GSA Network) is a national youth leadership organization that empowers youth activists to fight homophobia and transphobia in schools by training student leaders and supporting student-led Gay-Straight Alliance clubs throughout the country. In California alone, GSA Network has brought GSA clubs to 56% of public high schools, impacting more than 1.1 million students at 850 schools. GSA Network's youth advocates have played a key role in changing laws and policies that impact youth at the local and state level. GSA Network operates the National Association of GSA Networks, which unites more than 30 statewide networks of GSA clubs throughout the country. GSA Network is also the founder of the Make It Better Project, which aims to stop bullying and prevent suicide. [www.gsanetwork.org](http://www.gsanetwork.org) <sup>[4]</sup>

**The California Foundation for Independent Living Centers** advocates for barrier-free access and equal opportunity for people with disabilities to participate in community life by increasing the capacity of Independent Living Centers to achieve their missions. [www.cfilc.org](http://www.cfilc.org) <sup>[5]</sup>

Press Release

<http://www.gsanetwork.org> <sup>[6]</sup>

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**Links**

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- [4] <https://gsanetwork.org/>
- [5] <http://www.cfilc.org>
- [6] <http://www.gsanetwork.org>