

Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

Statement-Georgia Hate Crimes Legislation Passage

In 2004 Georgia's hate crimes law was struck down by the Georgia Supreme Court as unconstitutional. For the past 16 years Georgia has remained without a hate crimes law and was one of only 5 states nationally to not have such protections for certain protected classes. The Georgia Legislature took enormous steps yesterday to rectify that issue when in a bi-partisan vote in both the House of Representatives and the Senate it overwhelmingly passed House Bill 426, the Hate Crimes Bill authored by Representative Chuck Esfration.

The Georgia Hispanic Chamber of Commerce (GHCC) would like to commend Rep. Esfration and the members of the House and Senate for this historic vote. It has worked diligently for the past 18 months advocating for House Bill 426 and we stand with them proudly on this important day. While GHCC acknowledges that the passage of HB 426 is just the first step towards justice and equality for people of all races, gender, religious beliefs, and sexual orientation, it also sees the passage of HB 426 as an important catalyst to help continue a necessary conversation between all Georgians. The GHCC stands ready to play its part in such conversation and calls on all its partners and allies in the community to join it towards helping to bring all Georgians together.

HB 426 will now be sent to the Governor for his signature. The GHCC encourages its members and all those that support this historic piece of legislation to contact the Governor's office and expression your support for this historic measure.