

IN OBSERVANCE OF THE 15TH ANNUAL TRANSGENDER DAY OF REMEMBRANCE

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, November 20, 2013

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in observance of the 15 Annual Transgender Day of Remembrance.

Fifteen years ago, the tragic murder of transgender musician Rita Hester in Boston offered our nation a glimpse into the daily struggle and injustice suffered by transgender Americans. In honor of her memory, transgender activist Gwendolyn Ann Smith founded the first Transgender Day of Remembrance in 1998 as an occasion to remember all those who have been lost due to violence and prejudice against transgender and gender non-conforming individuals. Despite significant advances in the struggle for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) equality in recent years, many people do not realize or recognize that transphobia exists, and transgender individuals continue to face discrimination in every major aspect of their day-to-day lives.

Tragically, members of the transgender community are too often the victims of hate-motivated violence. Each year around the world, hundreds of transgender individuals of all ages—particularly transgender women of color—are brutally attacked, injured, or murdered simply because of who they are, and the list of names to memorialize grows ever longer. In 2013 alone, this figure topped 238 lives lost, but we know that the real number of deaths is much higher as many cases go unreported and uninvestigated.

All people deserve to be treated with dignity and respect, as well as live free from fear of discrimination and harm. For transgender indi-

viduals, the lack of access to culturally competent health care, disproportionate rates of poverty and homelessness, resorting to survival sex or attempting suicide, maltreatment by law enforcement, and employment discrimination remain serious challenges to their well-being. As a nation, we must do more to address these issues, root out stigma and racism, and foster greater inclusion in our society.

At the federal level, one of the immediate steps that we can take to protect the rights of transgender individuals is to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 2013 (ENDA), a bipartisan measure that strengthens basic employment protections for all Americans and, in my opinion, is long overdue. On November 7, 2013, the Senate sent a clear message that employer discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity should be outlawed when it passed ENDA by a vote of 64–32. I urge Speaker BOEHNER to reconsider his position and allow the House to vote on passage of a fully inclusive ENDA as soon as possible.

Mr. Speaker, transgender rights are human rights. As we observe the 15th Annual Transgender Day of Remembrance, let us not only remember the lives of all those whom we have lost to transphobic hate, but honor their memory and sacrifice by recommitting ourselves to making a difference in the lives of LGBT individuals and other vulnerable communities as a whole. I will continue working tirelessly with my colleagues in Congress, the Obama administration, and civil rights advocates to ensure that our laws recognize LGBT persons and provide them with equal opportunities to succeed.

SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Title IV of Senate Resolution 4, agreed to by the Senate of February 4, 1977, calls for establishment of a system for a computerized schedule of all meetings and hearings of Senate com-

mittees, subcommittees, joint committees, and committees of conference. This title requires all such committees to notify the Office of the Senate Daily Digest—designated by the Rules Committee—of the time, place and purpose of the meetings, when scheduled and any cancellations or changes in the meetings as they occur.

As an additional procedure along with the computerization of this information, the Office of the Senate Daily Digest will prepare this information for printing in the Extensions of Remarks section of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD on Monday and Wednesday of each week.

Meetings scheduled for Thursday, November 21, 2013 may be found in the Daily Digest of today's record.

MEETINGS SCHEDULED

NOVEMBER 22

10 a.m.

Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

To hold hearings to examine housing finance reform, focusing on developing a plan for a smooth transition.

SD-538

DECEMBER 11

2:15 p.m.

Special Committee on Aging

To hold hearings to examine protecting seniors from medication labeling mistakes.

SD-562

DECEMBER 18

2:15 p.m.

Special Committee on Aging

To hold hearings to examine the future of long-term care policy, focusing on continuing the conversation.

SD-562