

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 7, 2008

The Honorable Condoleezza Rice  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Madam Secretary:

We write to express our disappointment with Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs Jeffrey T. Bergner's April 17<sup>th</sup> letter written in response to our February 21<sup>st</sup> letter urging you to act through your leadership as Secretary to eliminate inequities facing gays and lesbians at the State Department.

Mr. Bergner's response was unsatisfactory. He cites a limited range of actions that embassies may currently take in support of unmarried partners of Foreign Service Officers (FSOs). We are acutely aware of the limitations facing gay and lesbian Foreign Services Officers and their partners; the central motivation for our initial letter was to request that you consider providing comparable benefits, protections, and services to those enjoyed by family members of married FSOs. And while we were pleased to learn that your Director General has, at last, opened the Security Overseas Seminar to all family members, we would appreciate an explanation of why other partner-related security issues (i.e. health services and evacuation assistance) cannot currently be made available under the same rationale.

Given that Mr. Bergner's letter does not address many of the points raised in our initial letter, we write again to urge that you take the initiative in addressing the following policy areas:

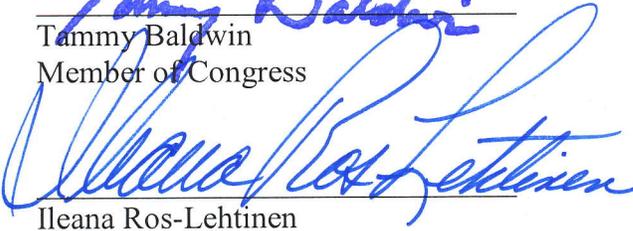
- Inclusion in travel orders for same-sex domestic partners of FSOs
- Access to training, including language classes, for same-sex domestic partners of FSOs
- Emergency evacuation and medevac from post when necessary for same-sex domestic partners of FSOs
- Access to post health units for same-sex domestic partners of FSOs
- Visa support for same-sex domestic partners accompanying FSOs to overseas postings, and for same-sex foreign-born domestic partners accompanying FSOs to postings in Washington or elsewhere in the U.S.
- Preferential status for employment at post comparable to that enjoyed by Eligible Family Members (EFMs) for same-sex domestic partners of FSOs

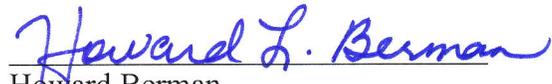
As we already stated, many of these changes might be efficiently addressed through the inclusion of same-sex domestic partners under the definition of an EFM in the Foreign Service Standardized Regulation 040(m). None of the changes above are contrary to the letter or spirit of the Defense of Marriage Act.

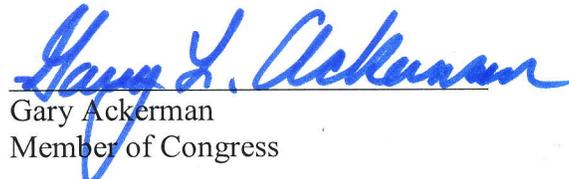
Madame Secretary, we again look to your personal leadership on this issue, in the interest of mission effectiveness, workplace equity, and fairness for those who sacrifice so much for our country. We would be pleased to work with you and look forward to your timely response.

Sincerely,

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Tammy Baldwin  
Member of Congress

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen  
Member of Congress

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Howard Berman  
Member of Congress

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gary Ackerman  
Member of Congress