



**PROTECTING LGBT YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS** (114<sup>th</sup> Congress H.R. 1779; S. 262)  
LULAC supports the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA), H.R. 1779; S. 262. RHYA provides needed resources for runaway and homeless youth shelter and services, and would prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity in all of RHYA programs. The bill sponsors are Rep. John Yarmuth (D-KY) and Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT).

*(Source: National LGBTQ Taskforce)*

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA), funds three key pillars of intervention to help homeless youth:

- Street Outreach: provides education, treatment, counseling and referrals to vital services
- Basic Center: provides temporary shelter, counseling, family reunification services and aftercare services
- Transitional Living: provides longer-term housing with supportive services, including Maternal Group Homes

Why are youth homeless?

- Economic hardship due to the depressed economic climate forces some youth from their homes
- Severe family conflict, including abuse and abandonment
- 42-74% experienced physical or sexual abuse and many young people are exploited after becoming homeless
- Up to one-third “age out” of foster care with nowhere else to go
- Families force them to leave due to pregnancy, substance abuse, or non-acceptance of sexual orientation
- Nearly 100,000 exit the juvenile justice system yearly with little to no financial and housing resources

*(Source: National Network for Youth)*

#### STUDENT NON-DISCRIMINATION ACT

H.R. 846; S. 439

The Student Non-Discrimination Act (SNDA) prohibits public schools from discriminating against any student on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. In addition, the SNDA prohibits discrimination against any student because of the actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity of a person with whom a student associates or has associated. Further, retaliation for lodging a complaint of discrimination is prohibited. The bill allows an aggrieved individual to assert a violation of these prohibitions in a judicial proceeding. In addition, the SNDA allows federal authorities to address discrimination made unlawful by the bill. The SNDA is modeled after Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §§ 1681-1688), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex and provides legal recourse to redress such discrimination. SNDA was introduced in the House by Reps. Jared Polis (D-CO), Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL), and Bobby Scott (D-VA) and in the Senate by Sen. Al Franken (D-MN) on February 10, 2015.

*(Source: Human Rights Campaign)*

#### SAFE SCHOOLS IMPROVEMENT ACT

H.R. 2902; S. 311

The Safe Schools Improvement Act (SSIA) would amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) to require school districts in states that receive ESEA funds to adopt codes of conduct specifically prohibiting bullying and harassment, including on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and religion. SSIA would also require that states report data on bullying and harassment to the Department of Education. The Department of Education would then be required to provide Congress with a report on the state reported data every two years. The Safe Schools Improvement Act was reintroduced in the Senate by Sens. Bob Casey (D-PA) and Mark Kirk (R-IL) on January 29, 2015. SSIA was also reintroduced in the House of Representatives on June 25, 2015 by Rep. Linda Sanchez (D-CA).

*(Source: Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network)*