

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

May 28, 1998

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

Today I have signed an Executive Order entitled *Further Amendment to Executive Order 11478, Equal Employment Opportunity in the Federal Government*. The Order provides a uniform policy for the Federal Government to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in the federal civilian workforce and states that policy for the first time in an Executive Order of the President.

It has always been the practice of this Administration to prohibit discrimination in employment based on sexual orientation in the civilian workforce, and most federal agencies and departments have taken actions, such as the issuance of policy directives or memoranda from the agency heads, to memorialize that policy. The Executive Order I have signed today will ensure that there is a uniform policy throughout the Federal Government by adding sexual orientation to the list of categories for which discrimination is prohibited in Executive Order 11478 (i.e. race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, or age).

This Executive Order states Administration policy but does not and cannot create any new enforcement rights (such as the ability to proceed before the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission). Those rights can be granted only by legislation passed by the Congress, such as the Employment Non-Discrimination Act. I again call upon Congress to pass this important piece of civil rights legislation which would extend these basic employment discrimination protections to all gay and lesbian Americans. Individuals should not be denied a job on the basis of something that has no relationship to their ability to perform their work.

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EXECUTIVE ORDER

FURTHER AMENDMENT TO EXECUTIVE ORDER 11478,
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States, and in order to provide for a uniform policy for the Federal Government to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, it is hereby ordered that Executive Order 11478, as amended, is further amended as follows:

Section 1. The first sentence of section 1 is amended by substituting "age, or sexual orientation" for "or age".

Sec. 2. The second sentence of section 1 is amended by striking the period and adding at the end of the sentence ", to the extent permitted by law."

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THE WHITE HOUSE,
May 28, 1998.

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