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**Chairman Ben Ray Luján**

**DCCC LGBT Equality Council Conference Call**

**April 9, 2015**

**WELCOME/ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

* Thank you all for taking the time to be a part of this conference call today
* And I want to thank you all for your support of the DCCC, in particular your support of the DCCC LGBT Equality Council
* I especially want to thank Mitchell Draizin, the founder and president of Longview Capital Advisors
  + Does great work helping the young and underprivileged access financial professions
* Mitch has been instrumental in the formation and success of the DCCC LGBT Equality Council
* I also want to recognize all our members that are in attendance

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE**

* Rep. Jared Polis (CO-2)
  + House Rules Committee and House Education and the Workforce Committee
  + House Democratic Steering and Policy Committee
  + LGBT Caucus Co-Chair
  + DCCC LGBT Equality Council Chair
* Rep. Kyrsten Sinema (AZ – 9) [Frontline]
  + House Financial Services Committee
  + LGBT Caucus Co-Chair
  + DCCC LGBT Equality Council
* Rep. Mark Takano (CA – 41)
  + House Education and the Workforce Committee, House Veterans’ Affairs Committee
  + LGBT Caucus Co-Chair
  + DCCC LGBT Equality Council
* Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney (NY – 18) [Frontline]
  + House Agriculture Committee, House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee
  + LGBT Caucus Co-Chair
  + DCCC LGBT Equality Council
* Rep. David Cicilline (RI – 1)
  + House Foreign Affairs Committee, House Judiciary Committee
  + LGBT Caucus Co-Chair
  + DCCC LGBT Equality Council
* Rep. Mark Pocan (WI – 2)
  + House Budget Committee, House Education and the Workforce Committee
  + LGBT Caucus Co-Chair
  + DCCC LGBT Equality Council

**POLITICAL UPDATE**

* As Chairman, it has been my goal to increase the diversity of the DCCC itself, both in regards to our candidates and our staff.
* Because we need the support of the LGBT community, and we can encourage and reach out to them with a more diverse DCCC
* I strongly believe in protecting the civil rights of all Americans, and I recognize that there is more that can be done to guarantee this principle.
* And a part of continuing to promote equality and counter discrimination is protecting our own incumbents who advocate for LGBT issues
  + Including two LGBT Equality Council Members – Frontliners Rep. Kyrsten Sinema and Rep. Sean Patrick Maloney
* And I know we cannot make progress on LGBT equality until we elect more Democrats
  + The discriminatory law introduced by Indiana state Republicans was shameful, and goes against the framework of what was fought for in Selma
  + Democrats will fight to empower our communities, to promote equality and civil rights for all of our constituents
* On the other hand, House Republicans continue to stand in the way of the fight against discrimination
  + While the courts have made tremendous strides toward marriage equality in the past year, House Republicans remain stuck in the past
  + They refuse to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, and attempted to exclude protections for LGBT Americans from VAWA reauthorization
  + And House Republicans wasted taxpayer money defending DOMA in court
* That is why 2016 is so critical, and why we must continue to engage the LGBT community
  + The diversity of our caucus is a strength, and we must continue to embrace and celebrate it
  + And we will continue to fight for each and every hard-working family that we are fortunate to represent
* I know that the LGBT Equality Council will continue to do great work and reach out to the community as we progress into the 2016 cycle
* Thank you all again for your support of the DCCC and the DCCC LGBT Equality Council