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Rep. Mark Spreitzer Applauds Landmark U.S. Supreme Court Ruling Protecting LGBTQ Employees

BELOIT - Reacting to the U.S. Supreme Court's 6-3 decision confirming that workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity is not legal under the Civil Rights Act of 1964, State Representative Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit) applauded the landmark ruling, issued during LGBTQ Pride Month.

"Happy Pride! Today's U.S. Supreme Court decision makes clear what we have known for years: discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation and gender identity is both wrong and illegal," Spreitzer said. "No one should have to worry that their employer can fire them for being who they are or loving who they love."

The text of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 bans employment discrimination on the basis of sex. Today's Supreme Court ruling in *Bostock v. Clayton County, Georgia* affirmed that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and discrimination on the basis of gender identity are forms of sex discrimination, and therefore also prohibited. In 1982, Wisconsin became the first state to explicitly ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, but has not yet passed legislation to add gender identity to the list of protected classes that cannot be subject to discrimination.

"Wisconsin has banned workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation since 1982, and this ruling now ensures that Wisconsin workers cannot be discriminated against due to their gender identity," Spreitzer said. "While many businesses in our state already have policies that should protect workers against discrimination, this ruling ensures that every worker in every workplace has that protection."

"Transgender Wisconsinites still face discrimination in healthcare, housing, and other daily activities, but today's ruling lays the groundwork to expand protections to these areas as well," Spreitzer added. "The logic of today's ruling makes clear that both Wisconsin and federal non-discrimination laws that provide protections on the basis of sex must be read to include full protections for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender Wisconsinites. I will continue fighting to amend our laws to make these protections explicit, and even with expanded legal protections, we still have a lot of work to do. Transgender people, and Black transgender women in particular, face violence because of who they are. As a society, we must do better."

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