

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

January 19, 2010

The Honorable Yoweri Museveni
President, Republic of Uganda
c/o of the Embassy of Uganda
5911 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20011

Dear Mr. President:

We write to express our deep concern regarding the anti-homosexuality bill currently before the Ugandan Parliament.

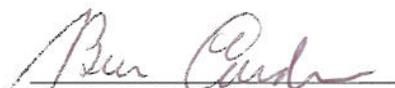
This troubling legislation would sanction prejudice toward people in Uganda based solely on sexual orientation, or even HIV status. This is in great contrast to trends toward greater tolerance in the global community. By creating harsh penalties for homosexuality, this bill not only codifies prejudice, but could also foster an increase in violence towards people simply based on sexual orientation.

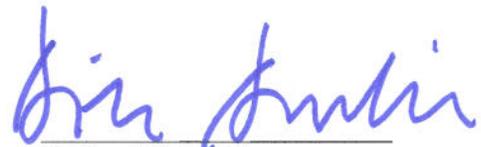
The legislation also requires persons "in authority," which could include government officials, employers, clergy, or others, to provide information about suspected violations of the Act. It further criminalizes the work done by human rights and health organizations that benefit lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender citizens, claiming those actions to be "homosexual promotion." Certainly these are not the types of actions to be encouraged as the world strives to reverse violence, poverty, and human suffering caused by divisiveness and repression.

While your nation has been a leader in Africa on many fronts, including the reduction of HIV infections, this proposed legislation will be a glaring setback in Uganda's human rights standing. Unfortunately, even the mere threat of the new and severe penalties for homosexual behavior suggested in this bill, including life imprisonment and the death penalty, could easily add to an already intolerant atmosphere in Uganda based on sexual orientation.

We understand you have recently raised concerns over the legislation and urge you to do to everything within your power to block its advancement. We look forward to continue the process of building a strong and long-lasting relationship between the United States of America and the Republic of Uganda.

Sincerely,


Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator


Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

Daniel K. Peake

Chim Dodd

Jon Hill

Kirsten E. Hillibrand

Shirrod Brown

Jeffrey A. Markley

Patty Murray

Mark Udall

Dianne Feinstein Barack Bof