**Human Rights Campaign: The 117th Congress Will Prioritize LGBTQ Equality**

**WASHINGTON –** Today, the 117th United States Congress swears in its new members, which boasts a pro-equality majority in the U.S. House of Representatives and record number of women and LGBTQ people elected. In response to first convening of the 117th Congress, **Human Rights Campaign President Alphonso David** issued the following statement:

“With support for LGBTQ equality continuing to increase among the American public, the 117th Congress is poised on a path to move equality forward and advance policies to improve the lives of millions of LGBTQ people.

“Over the last four years, the Trump-Pence administration has systematically attacked the most vulnerable of communities and enacted policies that have undermined our fundamental civil rights. The 117th Congress has the opportunity to not only put our democracy back on track but deliver real positive change for LGBTQ people’s daily lives -- including prioritizing passage of the Equality Act, crucial federal legislation that would finally guarantee explicit protections for LGBTQ people under our nation's existing civil rights laws.

“As we welcome the 117th Congress, the Human Rights Campaign looks toward the critical Georgia Senate runoff elections, in just two days, to ensure that we have a pro-equality working majority in the United States Senate for the 117th Congress to end the road blocks put up by our opponents.”

***Alphonso David****, Human Rights Campaign*

The 117th Congress boasts historic new additions, including the election of Ritchie Torres and Mondaire Jones as its first Black and Afro-Latino members to the House LGBTQ Caucus and Sean Patrick Maloney as the first openly LGBTQ person to chair the Democratic Congressionall Campaign Committee.

HRC recently released the [*Blueprint for Positive Change 2020*,](https://hrc-prod-requests.s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/Blueprint-2020.pdf?mtime=20201110185320&focal=none) an important brief that includes 85 individual policy recommendations, reaching across the federal government, aimed at bettering the daily lives of LGBTQ people at home and abroad. These recommendations do not require any action by Congress. The *Blueprint* has been shared with the Biden transition team as they evaluate the policy steps of the incoming administration. Recommendations include:

* Ensure consistent administrative implementation of *Bostock v. Clayton County* across all agencies enforcing civil rights statutes and provisions;
* Revise restrictions on transgender individuals to return to an inclusive policy of military service;
* Establish an interagency working group to address anti-transgender violence;
* Appoint openly-LGBTQ justices, judges, executive officials and ambassadors;
* Establish uniform data collection standards incorporation sexual orientation and gender identity into federal surveys;
* Establish an interagency working group to protect and support LGBTQ rights globally;
* End discrimination against gay and bisexual blood donors;
* Prohibit the practice of conversion therapy as a fraudulent business practice;
* Rescind and replace regulations restricting coverage of Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act; and
* Eliminate discrimination against beneficiaries in charitable choice and faith-based initiatives.