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**THE TREVOR PROJECT LAUDS ANTI-BULLYING BILL INTRODUCED
MAY 5 IN CONGRESS**

WEST HOLLYWOOD (June 15, 2009) – The Trevor Project is proud to join members of the National Safe Schools Partnership in supporting the Safe Schools Improvement Act, a federal anti-bullying bill introduced May 5 in the House of Representatives by Calif. Rep. Linda Sánchez. Sánchez was joined by lead cosponsors Fla. Rep Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and N.Y. Rep. Carolyn McCarthy and 52 bipartisan cosponsors.

The bill requires schools that receive Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act funding to implement a comprehensive anti-bullying policy that enumerates categories most often targeted by bullies, including race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression and others. It also requires states to include bullying and harassment data in their state-wide needs assessments reporting.

Current federal law provides important federal support to promote school safety but does not comprehensively and expressly focus on issues of bullying or harassment.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth are up to four times more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers. Research also shows that LGBTQ youth who are bullied in school because of their perceived sexual orientation or gender non-conforming are at an additional nearly three-fold risk for suicide. The vast majority of LGBTQ youth identify school as the primary place where bullying occurs, and therefore, The Trevor Project is committed to its role on the National Safe Schools Partnership and ensuring the successful passage of the Safe Schools Improvement Act.

Nearly two-thirds of middle and high school students (65%) said they had been bullied in school in the past year, according to [*From Teasing to Torment: School Climate in America*](#), a 2005 report from Harris Interactive and the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network.

The study also found that students at schools with a comprehensive anti-bullying policy similar to the Safe Schools Improvement Act reported harassment at a significantly reduced rate. Schools that had a comprehensive policy with enumerated categories were less likely to report a serious harassment problem at their school than those who did not have such a policy (33% vs. 44%, respectively).

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Members of the National Safe Schools Partnership, which in 2007 published recommendations for federal policy in [*Bridging the Gap in Federal Law: Promoting Safe Schools and Improved Student Achievement by Preventing Bullying and Harassment in Our Schools*](#), include the American Association of School Administrators, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the National Association of School Psychologists and the National PTA.

About NSSP

The National Safe Schools Partnership is an informal coalition of leading national education, health, civil rights, law enforcement, youth development and other organizations committed to ensuring that America's schools are safe for all children. To that end, members of the Partnership have joined together in support of federal policy recommendations based on long-standing research and experience.

About The Trevor Project

The Trevor Project is the leading national organization focused on crisis and suicide prevention efforts among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning youth. Every day, The Trevor Project saves young lives through its free and confidential helpline, in-school workshops, educational materials, online resources and advocacy. The organization was founded in 1998 by three filmmakers whose film, "Trevor," a comedy/drama about a gay teenager who attempts suicide, received the 1994 Academy Award® for Best Short Film (Live Action). For more information, visit TheTrevorProject.org.

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