

*This letter to the editor appeared in "Letters From CAMP Rehoboth," Oct. 16, 2009*

Five bills that greatly effect gay and transgender citizens are before the U.S. Congress. One would topple the so-called Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which bans federal recognition of same-gender marriage even in states where it is legal. Another would prohibit anti-gay and anti-transgender discrimination in the workplace. Another would allow foreign same-gender spouses of American citizens the same immigration rights as binational heterosexual couples. Another bill would allow gays to serve openly and without lying in the military. Another would protect from hate crimes. These five bills represent rights so basic they are taken for granted by heterosexual Americans. Far from the sinister motives our opponents impute to us, we who are gay and transgender American citizens only want to marry and live with our spouses, to be employed, to serve in the military and to be safe from hate crimes. This is that frightening Gay Agenda of which we have all heard.

Put even more succinctly, the Gay Agenda is simply this: equal rights in every state. Sounds pretty American to me.

**Douglas Marshall-Steele**