

RICHARD S. MADALENO, JR.  
STATE SENATOR  
18th Legislative District  
Montgomery County

Budget and Taxation Committee



*The Senate of Maryland*  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 25, 2010

Mr. Wesley Bush  
CEO  
Northrop Grumman Corporation  
1840 Century Park East  
Los Angeles, California 90067-2199

Dear Mr. Bush,

As a lifelong resident and elected official from Maryland, I was very excited to learn about the possibility of Northrop Grumman choosing Maryland as home for its new headquarters. Our state would be thrilled to welcome a dynamic international company like Northrop Grumman as a corporate citizen. Before making this important decision, I ask that you consider a critical issue that sets Maryland quite dramatically apart from neighboring Virginia: our commitment to the ideals of nondiscrimination, diversity, and inclusion in the workplace.

Northrop Grumman's commitment to nondiscrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is well known. The Human Rights Campaign has recognized you as one of America's leading companies on LGBT equality issues, and for good reason: You maintain a strong diversity and inclusion program, described on your website, including an LGBT Employee Resource Group; a written nondiscrimination policy covering sexual orientation; health insurance for partners; bereavement and family leave policy for same-sex partners; and diversity training company-wide. As the only openly gay member of the Maryland State Senate, I would be proud to welcome such a corporate proponent of equality to my state.

It is precisely Northrop Grumman's culture of inclusion and nondiscrimination that empowers you to attract, develop, and retain the most highly skilled, innovative, and committed employees. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, talented individuals are increasingly voting with their feet, choosing not to work where LGBT people are discriminated against. For some families, not having the option to add a partner to their health insurance can be the deciding factor in accepting a job.

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While individuals may have the option of voting with their feet, it is time that corporations also take a stand for their gay and lesbian employees and their families. Northrop Grumman will select as its home either our state that embraces diversity and prohibits discrimination, or the Commonwealth of Virginia, which is actually turning back the clock and mandating discrimination. Let me shed some light on the differences between our two states.

Since 2001, Maryland has prohibited discrimination against gays and lesbians in employment, housing, and public accommodations. We believe strongly that open, tolerant, and diverse societies are the ones with the most vibrant and dynamic economies. In contrast, Virginia is quite dramatically moving in the other direction, dismantling the few protections it once gave to its LGBT citizens.

One of the first acts Virginia Governor Robert McDonnell has taken since assuming his office was removing sexual orientation from executive orders banning discrimination in state employment, reversing nearly a decade of precedent. It is startling to me that a state would move so quickly and unilaterally on this issue with so many pressing issues facing our economies and our citizens. The idea that gay or lesbian state employees could be targeted for their sexual orientation is unthinkable here in Maryland.

Next upon taking office, Governor McDonnell, with concurrence from the new Virginia Attorney General Kenneth Cuccinelli, killed a proposal, supported by all major Virginia educational institutions, including The University of Virginia, Virginia Tech, William & Mary and George Mason University, to provide basic health insurance coverage for partners of gay and lesbian faculty and staff—even if they were willing to pay for it themselves. The University of Virginia's president publicly called for this essential benefit in order to compete with peer institutions. We understand this logic in Maryland, and that is why we provide competitive benefits for all of our employees, including our higher education institutions.

Finally, Virginia's new Attorney General is reportedly seeking to have Virginia's universities rescind their policies banning discrimination based on sexual orientation. This sends a chilling message not only to gay and lesbian faculty members, but to the very students they hope to enroll. How many LGBT students would choose to live in dorms after being explicitly told they won't be protected from anti-gay harassment? I would trust that a leading corporation like Northrop Grumman would have serious misgivings about locating in a state that takes such a misguided stand, restricting their educational and business talent pool.

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Here in Maryland, we value our gay and lesbian citizens as part of a diverse population that makes the state strong. Just this week, our Attorney General, Doug Gansler, released an opinion that will allow our state to recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states which could be critical for some of your California-based employees who would need to relocate to the new headquarters. Across the Potomac, Virginia is doing the opposite and letting its LGBT citizens – and those considering whether to move and work there – know that they and their families are unwelcome second-class citizens. And they are counting on corporations like yours not to care.

Given Northrop Grumman's commitment to diversity and nondiscrimination, I imagine that Virginia's officials have cynically judged you wrong, and that you do care. I know that employees considering whether they want to live and work in Virginia care. In an increasingly competitive marketplace, a great corporation cannot afford to drive away employees on the basis of their sexual orientation or any other personal characteristic.

While I know that there are many other factors that you are taking into consideration, I hope that this issue helps you make your decision.

Thank you for your attention. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard S. Madaleno, Jr." in a cursive style.

Richard S. Madaleno, Jr.