

Below is a statement I made on the Floor of the House of Representatives on April 23, 2009, in support of the National Day of Silence. Click [here](#) to watch the video.

“Madame Speaker, I rise today in observance of the National Day of Silence.

Last Friday, April 17th, marked the 13th annual National Day of Silence, a day where students throughout the country follow in the footsteps of the great civil rights advocates like Mahatma Gandhi and spend the day in civil disobedience. These students remained silent for one day to bring attention to and to highlight the discrimination some of their peers endure by speaking out about their sexual orientation and their personal gender identity.

When asked to explain why they will participate in the National Day of Silence, some of the young people in my district said

- We stand up and stand out by not speaking out on that day.

- Day of Silence is a day to acknowledge the roads already traveled and the ones soon to be traveled. It's to show how far we have come, and how much further we have left to go.

- The Day of Silence brings attention to the oppression that queer youth face from their peers and their classroom, and is a reminder that we still have so much work to do.

I commend all of my constituents who observed Day of Silence.

Though nationally observed Day of Silence has passed this year, I would ask my colleagues to take a moment of silence today to reflect on what we can do for our queer youth to make their lives better, to make their schools safer and to end discrimination.”