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The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Community Center of Colorado, the state's largest GLBT organization, issued the following statement regarding the death of Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) late Tuesday.

Kennedy's death means the loss of a great friend to the GLBT community – many considered him the community's greatest champion in the U.S. Congress.

Kennedy led the fight for rights for not only the GLBT community, but for people with AIDS from the beginning of the epidemic.

"From early days of AIDS crisis, he was there for us," recalled the Human Rights Campaign's David Smith, who worked as the senator's director of communication from 2003 to 2005. "He was battling for us, taking on a then very powerful Jesse Helms, who wanted to see us in concentration camps. God only knows what would have happened if Senator Kennedy hadn't been there."

The Human Rights Campaign and several other national LGBT organizations and bloggers Wednesday released statements or commented about the loss.

The GLBT Community Center of Colorado joins with them in expressing our gratitude at his many years of fighting for civil rights for all Americans and for our sadness in his passing.

"Senator Kennedy fought hard to end discrimination against the GLBT community, including making sure that transgender people were included in the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA)," said GLBT Community Center Legal Director Mindy Barton. "He was one of only a few senators who voted against the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). He worked tirelessly to ensure basic civil rights for our community."

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