

Lgbt policy in the us



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

- Frida Montoya

Advocating Gay and Lesbian Rights

As the diverse societies within America alter over time so do the laws of the country, either supporting or declining the growth of such changes. A relevant turn within society can be found in the growing support towards gay and lesbian rights, citizens argue that the advance of equal right in the LGTB community is something that should be pushed for but, to what extent will they go to gain the support of the government?

The government can be said to have mixed feeling about the LGBT community having the Democratic Party pushing forward with it and the Republican Party arguing that the concept of the LGBT community is immoral and an alienation of human nature. The simple fact that the movement is active signifies as a sign of just how far America has come to exercise the true meaning of equal rights amongst its citizens, looking past race, sexual orientation, disabilities and many other factors. Despite the many supporters hate groups have begun forming in attempt to halt the inevitable change of equal rights for all.

...Republican Party's position that marriage should be limited to a man and a woman... We *would* condemn anyone who vilifies the LGBT community with demonizing rhetoric and falsehoods. And that's exactly what Perkins and Lane routinely do. Perkins, who heads the Family Research Council, has repeatedly portrayed LGBT people as perverted. He's called the "It Gets Better" campaign - designed to give LGBT students hope for a better tomorrow - "disgusting" and a "concerted effort" to "recruit" children into

the gay “lifestyle.” Lane is head of the American Renewal Project, funded by the virulently anti-LGBT American Family Association (AFA). The AFA’s chief spokesman, Bryan Fischer, has said that “[h]omosexuality gave us Adolph Hitler and homosexuals in the military gave us the Brown Shirts, the Nazi war machine and six million dead Jews.” (Cohen, Richard).

As the excerpt states there’s a clear disapproval of the LGTB community, for personal or political reasons. The push for Equality is more than simply the mere acceptance of the group its self, their rights have to be equally protected under the law which is where the situation can get tricky. Even the politicians are utilizing certain content to benefit their overall voting ranks by making the LGTB community look bad. Like in the case of Brian Edwards and Tom Privitere. “The married couple can’t stand the thought of LGBT youth seeing a mailer that uses their cherished engagement photo to attack a politician for supporting same-sex civil unions. The photo, which shows the couple kissing, was misappropriated by an anti-LGBT hate group for use in the mailer attacking Colorado state Sen. Jean White. Bold words on a red background were added to the picture: “State Senator Jean White’s idea of ‘Family Values?’”(SPLC Sues Anti-gay Hate Group over Defilement of Couple’s Engagement Photo).

The laws pertaining Lesbians, gays, transgender and bi individuals are not equally represented if even given through all the states making it difficult for citizens who fall within the LGBT category to have their rights fully protected. For instance, a current case where the acknowledgment of a marriage was purposely overseen in a death certificate in Alabama because the couple, Paul Hard and David Fancher, was gay.” The SPLC announced a federal

lawsuit today challenging these laws. The lawsuit, filed on Hard's behalf in the U. S. District Court for the Middle District of Alabama, seeks to overturn the state's Marriage Protection Act, a 1998 law that bans the recognition of same-sex marriages from other states, and the Sanctity of Marriage Amendment, which enshrined this ban in the constitution in 2005"(SPLC Challenges Alabama's Unconstitutional Marriage Protection Act and Sanctity of Marriage Amendment). Certain groups that are against same sex marriage argue that marriage should only be for those that fall within the guidelines of religious beliefs, meaning not gay people but marriage recognition can imply much more. In the case of Tracey Cooper-Harris who happened to be a disabled U. S. Army veteran, and her wife, Maggie their marriage kept them from being able to get the benefits that other veterans and their wife's were provided with.

The court declared the Title 38 sections unconstitutional, finding there is no military purpose that could justify discriminating against veterans with same-sex spouses. It also found that Title 38 is not rationally related to the military's commitment to caring for veteran families. The U. S. Supreme Court struck down DOMA in a separate case earlier this year. Because of the court's ruling on Title 38, Tracey and Maggie are now eligible for a number of benefits, including additional disability compensation and the right to be buried together in a state or national veterans cemetery. These benefits, and many others, are routinely provided to heterosexual married veterans and their spouses. (SPLC Lawsuit Ends with Landmark Ruling That Is First to Decide Same-sex Spouses' Rights to Benefits).

The recognition of equal marriage in every aspect is something that the LGTB community is striding for, it is not just a legal document it is a right that comes along with many other aspects that are still yet to be approved by the government. However not all issues originate because the state itself denies a LGTB individual their rights but from discrimination that more than likely exceeds to an abusive level.

Discrimination tends to be very common in the life of a LGTB individual. If for instance done in a school should be overseen by an adult of faculty member who would naturally step in and put a stop to it but in the case of some this is not the situation and the discrimination rises from other students to adults.

SPLC filed a federal civil rights lawsuit that seeks to enforce Destin's civil rights and force the district to address the mistreatment of Destin and other lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender students. The suit, filed in December, asserts the district has violated Destin's rights under the 14th Amendment's Equal Protection Clause and Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972. " District officials who are entrusted with the safety and education of all students not only ignored, dismissed and even blamed victims for the abusive behavior of faculty and other students, they also participated in discriminatory acts," said Anjali Nair, SPLC staff attorney. " Destin has been humiliated and tortured. Our suit seeks justice for her and other students who were mistreated, as well as reforms that will prevent this from happening again."(SPLC Files Suit to Stop Anti-LGBT Harassment by Students and Faculty in Mississippi's Moss Point School District).

The non-supportive part of the community has and will continue to alienate individuals that take part in the LGTB group even if it is simply to support the cause. Despite this, young supporters are uprising all through the United States figuring out ways to improve certain issues that tend to attack the LGTB groups in schools. One of these is bullying an issue that was addresses by Hannah Bradley and her classmates. "...the students wore name tags stating their orientation. But Bradley and other students were censored by school officials who forced them to remove their tags. The SPLC today demanded in a letter to Jefferson County High School in Dandridge, Tenn., that school officials stop this censorship and warned they face a possible federal lawsuit on Bradley's behalf"(Citing Free Speech Rights, SPLC Demands Tennessee High School Stop Censoring Students). Alienation can only go so far but it has gotten to the point where a thing such as *Conversion Therapy* was created. *Conversion Therapy* is basically a "treatment" that is guaranteed to convert any individual that fall within the LGTB category. It is then with situations such as these that the government can and will step in. " A ruling by the Ninth U. S. Circuit Court of Appeals that upholds California's ban on conversion therapy for minors, a discredited practice that claims to "cure" people of being gay, is another sign of the collapse of the conversion therapy industry, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center... Science proves that it doesn't work. It harms kids, and it tears families apart" (Appeals Court Ruling in California Is Another Sign of Conversion Therapy Industry's Collapse).

The fact that the government its self recognizes that some of these actions are inhumane, not just to a certain minority, but to the United States as a

whole can say a lot about the direction in which we are headed to. LGTB rights will no longer be overlooked for the issues of its upbringing have already been addressed by the government several times indirectly encouraging the community to continue to advocate for those right and also giving certain individuals the confidence they need to state their case to the judicial branch pertaining their rights. As more and more people push for this cause the LGTB community will gradually continue to gain more rights for it will be brought to the attention of the government.

Today, by passing the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), the U. S. Senate took a historic step toward ending this outrage... It simply prohibits employers from using a worker's sexual orientation or gender identity as the basis for hiring, firing, promotion, or compensation. It means that LGBT people will be afforded the same workplace protections already in place regarding race, religion, gender, national origin and disability...But employers in 29 states can still lawfully discriminate because of sexual orientation, and in 33 states they can discriminate because of gender identity...Over the last few years, we've passed milestone after milestone on the road to equality for LGBT people - among them, the Supreme Court's recent decision to strike down the Defense of Marriage Act. (Senate Passage of ENDA Is Important Step toward Dignity and Fairness for LGBT People).

Overall, it is accurate to say that the LGTB community will continue to grow both in members and supporters making it nearly impossible for the government to devolve and go back to the way things had previously been. The need for equality will gradually be overseen from every point by the government until one day; hopefully we can all say that we do indeed have

equal rights that are protected by the constitution of the United States of America.

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