



## **Barack Obama and Homosexuality/Gender issues A Brief Summary by the Family Research Council June 2009**

### Initiatives

- Eugene Robinson, a homosexual Episcopalian Bishop, said a prayer at an inaugural event at the Lincoln Memorial.<sup>1</sup>
- The State Department will now grant households headed by homosexuals the same benefits given to families headed by heterosexual married couples.<sup>2</sup>
- Under the Obama administration, the State Department supports the UN statement on “Human Rights, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity.”<sup>3</sup>

On June 1, 2009, President Obama proclaimed June 2009 “Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Pride Month.” In this proclamation he promised support for the following:

- “Efforts at the United Nations to decriminalize homosexuality around the world.” This refers to the UN Statement on Human Rights, Sexual Orientation, and Gender Identity.
- “Enhancing hate crimes laws.” This refers to the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009, H.R. 1913.
- “Civil unions and Federal rights for LGBT couples.” Interestingly, he does not mention actually legalizing same-sex “marriage.”
- “Outlawing discrimination in the workplace.” This refers to the Employment Non-Discrimination Act.
- “Ensuring adoption rights.”
- “Ending the existing “Don't Ask, Don't Tell” policy in a way that strengthens our Armed Forces and our national security.” There are two interesting aspects of this statement. First, he refers to the “existing ‘Don't Ask, Don't Tell’ policy,” suggesting that perhaps a lesser form might be possible, or a similar policy with less of a penalty—whatever he means, the language is decidedly ambiguous. Secondly, the caveats inserted afterward about strengthening national security and our Armed Forces suggest that the process will

---

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.foxnews.com/story/0,2933,479932,00.html>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2009/05/23/ap-clinton-announce-gay-diplomats-receive-equal-benefits/>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2009/03/120509.htm>

not be quick, and that the military might have a greater say in the issue. It seems that Obama is hedging on this.

- “Fighting the HIV/AIDS epidemic by both reducing the number of HIV infections and providing care and support services to people living with HIV/AIDS across the United States.”<sup>4</sup>

Campaign Promises ([http://change.gov/agenda/civil\\_rights\\_agenda/](http://change.gov/agenda/civil_rights_agenda/))

- Expand hate crimes statutes to protect LGBT individuals
- Support for Employment Non-Discrimination Act, no discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity
- Support for full civil unions and federal rights for same-sex couples. The website states: “Obama also believes we need to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act and enact legislation that would ensure that the 1,100+ federal legal rights and benefits currently provided on the basis of marital status are extended to same-sex couples in civil unions and other legally-recognized unions.”
- Opposition to a Constitutional ban on same-sex marriage.
- Expanded adoption rights for homosexual individuals and couples
- More efforts to fight AIDS
- Empowering women to fight AIDS

According to the White House website’s Civil Rights Section, President Obama supports:

- The “Employment Non-Discrimination Act and believes that our anti-discrimination employment laws should be expanded to include sexual orientation and gender identity.”<sup>5</sup>
- He supports adding gender and sexual orientation to hate crimes legislation, a bill for which has passed the House and is soon to be voted on in the Senate.<sup>6</sup> Critics say that such a law would stifle the ability to criticize homosexuality.<sup>7</sup>
- Obama “supports full civil unions and federal rights for LGBT couples and opposes a constitutional ban on same-sex marriage.”<sup>8</sup> While he has stated that he himself opposes gay marriage, he will do nothing to stop it. Critics, however, have suggested that he has shied away from a promise to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act. **In his campaign and time as President-elect, he said that he would repeal DOMA (see above), but since his election he has made no effort to do so, nor does he seem likely to take active steps toward this.**
- Obama “supports repealing Don’t Ask Don’t Tell in a sensible way that strengthens our armed forces and our national security.”<sup>9</sup> Despite Obama’s public support for the repeal of the policy, comments from the Pentagon suggest that this will not be a rapid process.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Presidential-Proclamation-LGBT-Pride-Month/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Presidential-Proclamation-LGBT-Pride-Month/)

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/civil\\_rights/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/civil_rights/)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2009/04/29/house-passes-giving-gays-new-protections/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2009/04/30/social-conservatives-blast-hate-crime-saying-limit-free-speech/>

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/civil\\_rights/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/civil_rights/)

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/civil\\_rights/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/civil_rights/)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2009/05/22/pentagon-clarifies-comments-repealing-dont-ask-policy/>

The administration, however, did not challenge a ruling in a San Francisco appeals court that would undermine the policy and may be content to see it go passively.<sup>11</sup>

- Obama “believes that we must ensure adoption rights for all couples and individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation.”<sup>12</sup>
- Issued a statement on April 28, 2009 urging Congress to act quickly and pass the Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009.<sup>13</sup>

### Miscellaneous

- Two lesbian women were on short list for Supreme Court nomination (Kathleen Sullivan and Pamela Karlan, both of Stanford Law School), but passed over.<sup>14</sup>
- Barack Obama is the first President to set aside tickets for families headed by homosexual parents for the White House Easter Egg Roll.<sup>15</sup>
- He is also the first President to mention “gay rights” in his election victory speech.<sup>16</sup>

### Appointments according to the Gay and Lesbian Leadership Institute

(<http://www.glli.org/presidential>)

- Judy Applebaum - Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs
- Vic Basile - Counselor to the Director, Office of Personnel Management
- Anthony Bernal - Scheduler, Office of Dr. Jill Biden
- Jeremy Bernard - White House Liaison, National Endowment for the Humanities
- John Berry - Director-Designate, Office of Personnel Management
- Brian Bond - Deputy Director, White House Office of Public Liaison
- Raphael Bostic - Assistant Secretary for Policy Development and Research, Housing and Urban Development
- Peter Burleigh, Interim Ambassador to India
- Ebs Burnough - Deputy Social Secretary, Office of the First Lady
- Michael Camunez - Domestic Policy Cluster Head, Presidential Personnel
- Brook Colangelo - Chief Information Officer, White House Office of Administration
- Jeffrey S. Crowley, MPH, Director of Office of National AIDS Policy
- Fred Davie - Policy Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships
- Marisa Demeo - Associate Judge, DC Superior Court
- Eric Fanning - Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for White House Liaison
- Kathy Greenlee - Assistant Secretary, Administration on Aging, Department of Health and Human Services
- Emily Hewitt, Chief Justice, U.S. Court of Federal Claims
- Fred Hochberg - Chairman-Designate, U.S. Export-Import Bank
- Shin Inouye - Director, Specialty Media

---

<sup>11</sup> <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB124268952606832391.html>

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/civil\\_rights/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/issues/civil_rights/)

<sup>13</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/Statement-by-the-President-on-HR-1913-the-Local-Law-Enforcement-Hate-Crimes-Prevention-Act-of-2009/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Statement-by-the-President-on-HR-1913-the-Local-Law-Enforcement-Hate-Crimes-Prevention-Act-of-2009/)

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/07/us/politics/07obama.html>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/05/07/us/politics/07obama.html>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2009/may/24/gay-rights-barack-obama-us>

- Karine Jean-Pierre - White House Liaison, U.S. Department of Labor
- Kevin Jennings - Assistant Deputy Secretary, Office of Safe & Drug Free Schools, Department of Education
- Elaine Kaplan - General Counsel, Office of Personnel Management
- Brad Kiley - Director, White House Office of Management and Administration
- Harry Knox - Member, Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships
- Kei Koizumi - Assistant Director for Federal Research and Development, Office of Science and Technology Policy
- Jeffrey Lerner - Regional Director, Office of Political Affairs
- Mercedes Marquez - Assistant Secretary, Community Planning and Development
- Kathy Martinez - Assistant Secretary of Disability Employment Policy, Department of Labor
- Mary Beth Maxwell - Senior Advisor, Department of Labor
- David Medina - Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the First Lady
- Alison Nathan - Assoc. Counsel, Office of White House Counsel
- Jeff Neal - Chief Human Capital Officer for the U.S. Department of Homeland Security
- Ven Neralla - Director of Priority Placement, Presidential Personnel
- Dave Noble - White House Liaison, National Aeronautics and Space Administration
- Mark Perriello - Director of Priority Placement, Presidential Personnel
- Ellie Sue Schafer - Director, White House Visitors Office
- Campbell Spencer - Regional Director, Office of Political Affairs
- Nancy Sutley – Chair, White House Council on Environmental Quality
- Moe Vela - Director of Operations, Office of the Vice President