

PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA "The Standard Bearer"

NBJC's Midterm Report Card: LGBT Equality and the Obama Administration



FAMILY RECOGNITION

- President Obama directed the Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary to initiate rulemaking, which went into effect on **January 18, 2011**, to ensure that hospitals that participate in Medicare and Medicaid respect the rights of patients to designate visitors. The President further advised that the rule should ensure that participating hospitals may not deny visitation privileges based on factors including sexual orientation or gender identity.
- The Labor Department **clarified the definition of "son and daughter"** under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) to ensure that an employee who assumes the role of caring for a child receives parental rights to family leave regardless of the legal or biological relationship.
- **NOTE:** Black female same-sex households are nearly twice as likely as White female same-sex couples to live with a child under 18 years of age, 52% versus 32% respectively. Black male same-sex couples parenting at twice the rate reported by White male same sex-couples, 36% versus 18% respectively (2000 US Census).

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WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION

- The President implemented a policy that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in hiring practices across the entire Executive branch of government.
- In addition to eliminating the practice in the White House and all federal agencies, President Obama has been proactively **trying to fill federal positions with LGBT appointments**. Now, according to The Victory Fund, President Obama has appointed more LGBT individuals in his first two years in the White House than President Clinton did during his entire eight years.
- President Obama is working with Congress to help pass an inclusive Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) that will provide basic protections against discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Currently, it is legal to fire a person for being LGBT in 29 states.

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SAFE SCHOOLS



- In his FY 2011 budget, the President proposes giving the Department of Education \$132 million in grants to help state and local governments fight violence and bullying in schools.
- President Obama personally reached out to LGBT youth, who may have been bullied, when he recorded a video message for the “***It Gets Better***” campaign. October 21, 2010. Other members of the administration followed the President’s lead and recorded videos showing their support and encouragement for bullied youth. They included: Vice President Biden, Secretaries Clinton, Sebelius, Vilsack, Solis, to name a few. The videos are posted at www.whitehouse.gov/itgetsbetter



REPEAL OF DADT

- On December 22, 2010, President Obama signed the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell (DADT) Repeal Act into law bringing the discriminatory policy’s 17 oppressive years to an end. Since it was enacted in 1993, DADT has ruined countless lives and destroyed the careers of thousands of LGBT servicemembers.
- Census data shows Black women with same-sex partners serve in the military at 11 times the rate of women overall. The Pentagon reports black women are discharged under DADT at three times the rate that they serve. Black lesbians in the military are often mothers, so a discharge means unemployment, loss of health care benefits for children.
- President Obama never wavered from his commitment to end DADT and restore the ability of every person, regardless of sexual orientation, to serve their country without having to hide who they are and who they love.



HUMAN RIGHTS

- The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act (HCPA) was signed into law by President Obama in October 2009. HCPA gives the DOJ the power to investigate and prosecute crimes of violence where a perpetrator has selected a victim because of the person’s actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.



HOUSING

- The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has ***proposed new rules*** that will provide protections for LGBT individuals and families by prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in any housing program that receives federal funds, which would include everything from Federal Housing Administration (FHA) mortgage insurance programs to Section 8 vouchers.



ELDER CARE



- *The Department of Health and Human Services made a \$900,000 grant to establish the first National Resource Center for LGBT Elders. The Center will provide information, assistance and resources for both LGBT organizations and mainstream, aging service providers at the state and community level to assist them in developing and providing culturally sensitive programs. The Center will also educate the estimated 1.5 to 4 million LGBT individuals 60 and older in the mainstream LGBT community about the importance of planning for long-term care needs.*



TRANSGENDER EQUALITY

- *In June 2010, the State Department announced a new policy to issue passports that reflect a person's current gender when either a previous passport or other personal documentation presented by an applicant reflects a different gender. This policy replaces the Department's old policy, which required documentation of sex reassignment surgery ([from the National Center for Transgender Equality](#)).*
- *The Obama administration includes gender identity in all of its non-discrimination policies for hiring in the White House and across all federal agencies. It is also making great strides to require any person, business, or government entity that receives federal funding to comply with trans-inclusive, non-discrimination policies in the implementation of their federal grants or federally funded programs.*



HIV/AIDS AWARENESS AND PREVENTION

- *The White House, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) launched a \$45 million campaign--The Act Against AIDS program--to raise awareness about AIDS. Act Against AIDS marks the first federally funded national domestic HIV/AIDS campaign in almost twenty years.*
- *One of the President's top HIV/AIDS policy priorities is the development and implementation of a National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS). There are three primary goals for the NHAS: Reducing HIV incidence; Increasing access to care and optimizing health outcomes; and Reducing HIV-related health disparities.*
- *In his FY2011 budget, President Obama calls for increases of more than \$1 billion in HIV/AIDS programs, which includes a \$20.4 million increase for programs specifically targeting gay and bisexual men and \$22 million for HIV prevention in the metropolitan areas hardest hit by the epidemic.*
- **NOTE:** *At some point in their lifetimes, 1 in 16 black men will be diagnosed with HIV infection, as will 1 in 30 black women; At the end of 2007, blacks accounted for almost half (46%) of people living with a diagnosis of HIV infection in the 37 states; In a recent study of men who have sex with men (MSM) in five cities, 67% of the HIV infected black MSM were unaware of their infection.*

