



National 'gay' leaders credit Obama for Dem's pro-homosexual platform

'Unprecedented partnership' nets new 1sts for LGBT community

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The release of the proposed platform for the Democratic Party's national convention has leaders of homosexual advocacy groups thanking presidential candidate Barack Obama for helping create a platform that aligns with "lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender" (or LGBT) activists' vision of American values.

"It is a forward-looking platform in so many areas, including those relating to LGBT people," said Rea Carey, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, in a released statement. "For the first time the platform explicitly calls for an end to discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity."

"The 2008 Democratic National Platform will be a guiding document for policy and legislation that embodies the values of our Party," said Jon Hoadley, executive director of the Stonewall Democrats, a network of homosexual activists named after violent pro-homosexual demonstrations that began at New York City's Stonewall Inn in 1969.

"These advancements in our Party's binding document are thanks to the work and input of LGBT delegates, Senator Obama and his campaign, LGBT advocates, and Stonewall Democrats across the country," Hoadley said.

The Democratic National Platform, called "Renewing America's Promise", was submitted and made public on Aug. 7 by the Platform Drafting Committee, chaired by Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano. The full text of the platform can be read [here](#).

According to the homosexual news site Temenos, two members of the LGBT community played a key role in drafting the platform: U.S. Rep. Tammy Baldwin (D-Wis.) and Diego Sanchez, director of Public Relations & External Affairs for the AIDS Action Committee, the first-ever transgender member of the Platform Committee.

While the platform itself does not use the terms "gay" or "homosexual," it contains language clearly advocating positions long called for by homosexual advocates.

For example, in the opening paragraph of a section called "A More Perfect Union", the platform states: "Democrats will fight to end discrimination based on race, sex, ethnicity, national origin, language, religion, *sexual orientation, gender identity, age* and disability in every corner of our country, because that's the America we believe in" (emphasis added).

Later in the same section the platform states, somewhat ambiguously, "We support the full inclusion of all families in the life of our nation, and support equal responsibility, benefits, and protections."

The application of that sentence specifically to homosexual unions is made clear, however, by the two sentences that immediately follow it:

"We will enact a comprehensive bipartisan employment non-discrimination act. We oppose the Defense of Marriage Act and all attempts to use this issue to divide us."

The federal Defense of Marriage Act, passed in 1996, allows states where homosexual marriage is not recognized to disregard those unions performed in other states that do perform 'gay' marriage. It also forbids the federal government from treating same-sex relationships as marriages, even if considered so by an individual state.

Even if the platform doesn't specifically mention the LGBT community, the clarity of its intent and application was not lost on Joe Solmonese, executive director of the Human Rights Campaign, the largest LGBT lobbying group and political action committee in the nation.

"The 2008 Platform reiterates and strengthens past support for legislation that would protect our community, including calls for the passage of hate crimes and comprehensive employment discrimination legislation, and the repeal of the discriminatory 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' policy in our nation's military," Solmonese said in a released statement.

Solmonese added, "The platform also supports the full inclusion of same-sex couples and their families, with equal rights, benefits and responsibilities. For the first time, the platform opposes the discriminatory Defense of Marriage Act, which bars federal recognition of even those same-sex couples legally married under state law.

"The platform also supports other issues of importance to for GLBT, and all Americans, including a call for a national strategy to combat HIV/AIDS, support for fair and impartial judges not driven by ideology, and requirements that faith-based programs not use federal dollars to discriminate."