

**National Gay and Lesbian  
Task Force**



June 29, 2009

President Barack H. Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Last week, I asked lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people and our straight allies what they would say to you today if they had the opportunity.

Mr. President, I present to you the many and varied voices of LGBT people, our friends and families from across this country, in commemoration of Pride month and the 40th anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion, the 1969 Greenwich Village demonstrations that gave birth to the modern LGBT rights movement.

These messages show the breadth of our lives. Yes, they call upon you to do everything in your power to repeal “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” and the Defense of Marriage Act, but they also reveal families without health care, the indignities of discrimination, the concerns for our children’s future and the economic challenges we too face. They show you our disappointment and anger as well as our hope and resilience.

I am attending today to represent our community’s determination and unwillingness to accept anything less than full equality and to give voice to what we strive for each and every day. I remember those brave women and men who came out and dreamed of equality and freedom long before Stonewall. I honor my friends lost to HIV/AIDS and cancer, and all those in our community who are uninsured, underinsured or encounter additional barriers in our broken health care system because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Mr. President, with the power, the anger and the hopes of many behind us, I will press this administration at every turn to create the changes that will improve the lives of LGBT people.

The scales of justice have not yet found balance because this country’s foundational value of full equality has not yet been met. All is not well between your administration and our community. We are frustrated and we are angry because we observe that our needs receive only a minimal response from you. We expect you to not only listen to us, but to also take action on our behalf, action that is long overdue.

Mr. President, I will advocate, I will push and I will not walk away satisfied with anything less than your abiding commitment to be a full partner in our pursuit of equality, dignity and respect.

We want you to join other presidents, including Lincoln, Kennedy and Johnson, who have found themselves at a crossroads in our nation’s history and exhibited leadership in the face of controversy, insisting that our government fulfill its promise of equality and justice for all.

Too many of us have experienced the pain, anger and humiliation of second-class citizenship. Your leadership is needed now.

Sincerely,

Rea Carey  
Executive Director

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