

INSIDE: **IN THE STATES**
THE BATTLE AGAINST
ANTI-LGBTQ BILLS

EYES ON CHECHNYA
EXPOSING ANTI-LGBTQ
ATROCITIES

HRC RISING
EXPANDING OUR
GRASSROOTS ARMY

 HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN

EQUALITY

SUMMER 2017

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CURRENT AS OF JUNE 30, 2017

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DEAR FRIENDS,

Donald Trump has proven himself to be as unpatriotic as he is unfit to serve as commander in chief. By announcing via Twitter a ban on transgender military service, he has launched an all out assault on the LGBTQ community and targeted the more than 15,000 transgender troops proudly serving in our military today.

This disgusting action endangers the lives of American service members, undermines military readiness, and makes our country less safe.

It is only the latest effort by Donald Trump and Mike Pence to undo our progress and drag LGBTQ people back into the closet.

But we're not backing down. Since the moment Donald Trump was sworn in as president, our grassroots movement has sought to defend our progress and resist the politics of hate and fear. We've marched and protested. We've called and lobbied. And now, we're building on those efforts and going on the offensive.

I am proud to announce the launch of HRC Rising — the largest grassroots expansion in our 37-year history. By allocating \$26 million to fund this nationwide grassroots effort, HRC Rising will build strength for the 2018 elections and beyond.

We have already begun hiring at least 20 additional full-time staff for HRC Rising, including dedicated political, field, grassroots

organizing, volunteer engagement, communications, and digital staff, who will join more than two dozen existing staff working on the initiative. They will immediately begin working across the nation to expand local partnerships, recruit additional volunteers, mobilize constituents, register voters and grow our grassroots army to amplify our impact in state legislatures and at the ballot box.

In Ohio, Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Arizona, and Nevada — we will make an especially strong, early push to organize against the Trump-Pence agenda and support pro-equality candidates in coming elections.

This historic effort comes on the heels of our Summer of Action.

Anchored by more than 250 events across more than 45 states of the District of Columbia, this summer we are registering thousands of new voters, hosting grassroots advocacy trainings, and stepping up visibility and outreach at LGBTQ Pride parades, equality marches, festivals and other events.

Our grassroots army of over 3 million — all of you — has proven that, even in the face of unprecedented challenges, we can make incredible progress and defeat the hateful politicians who've been emboldened by Donald Trump when we organize and mobilize. The power and determination of the 10 million LGBTQ voters and our allies across America will only continue to grow stronger in the face of discriminatory attacks on our rights and freedoms.

It's not enough to resist the hateful policies and attacks coming from the Trump-Pence regime — we must also accelerate the pace of progress toward full equality and secure protections for LGBTQ people in states and communities across the country. That's exactly why we're going on offense, and we need your help. **Join us by visiting hrc.im/Rising or text Rising to 30644.**

In solidarity,

Chad Griffin
President
Human Rights Campaign



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HRC EQUALITY STAFF

Carolyn Simon *Deputy Director of Digital Media & Content Strategy*

Robert Villaflor *Design Director*

Sarah Streyle *Deputy Director of Design*

Mary Wood *Design Assistant*

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTORS

Brian McBride, Nick Morrow, Grace Smith

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Tim Bahr, Olivia Dalton, Steffan Declue, Justin Giaquinto, Dane Grams, Mitch Johnson, Mollie Levin, Adam Marquez, Mary Beth Maxwell, Sarah McBride, Stephen Peters, Jeremy Pittman, Justin Snow, David Stacy, Prianka Srinivasan

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A year after 49 lives were taken in the shooting at Pulse in Orlando, HRC transforms its building into a beacon of hope and resilience.



Cover: Trump's ban could result in the discharge of as many as 15,000 transgender Americans currently serving our country with honor..

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SUMMER 2017

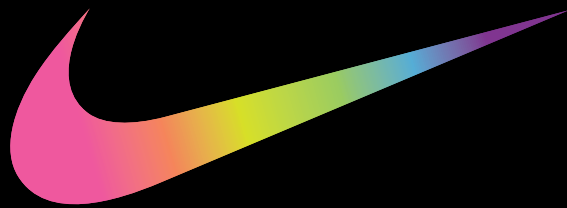
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NOW IS THE TIME FOR ACTION. A HASHTAG DOES NOT A MOVEMENT MAKE. YOU'VE GOT TO GET OUT AND SPEAK YOUR TRUTH."

— **Robin Roberts**, anchor of ABC's *Good Morning America*, at HRC's Louisiana Gala in New Orleans

BETRUE



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29%

Percentage of transgender adults who rate their health as poor, according to a recent study published in JAMA Internal Medicine. This stands in stark contrast to just 17 percent of cisgender adults.

The study underscores the disparities in health between transgender and cisgender people, which have become increasingly apparent.

Transgender people were also more likely to suffer from conditions such as obesity and depression, were more likely to be uninsured and less likely to seek medical treatment.

These studies show that there can be increased health concerns for transgender people because of lack of access to healthcare, and these can be made worse by discrimination, structural unemployment that leads to inaccessibility, and more. HRC Foundation works with healthcare facilities, employers, lawmakers and more to improve healthcare access for transgender individuals. **Learn more at hrc.org/transgender.**



up front

IT'S TIME FOR THE EQUALITY ACT

The Equality Act has been reintroduced in Congress with unprecedented support from corporations and government officials alike. The need for the Equality Act has never been more clear. In 2017, more than 130 anti-LGBTQ bills were introduced in 30 states.

Today, in a majority of states, LGBTQ people remain at risk of being fired, evicted or even denied services because of their identity. HRC joined

with lawmakers and businesses to fight for protections for LGBTQ people in the workplace, housing, education, federally funded programs and beyond.

Discrimination is a real and persistent problem for far too many LGBTQ Americans. HRC Foundation polling has found that nearly two-thirds of self-identified LGBTQ Americans report experiencing discrimination.

Learn more at hrc.org/equalityforward.

WORKPLACE EQUALITY IN MEXICO



HRC Equidad MX, an innovative project with the aim of achieving workplace equality and inclusion in Mexico, is now a reality. The program will increase awareness about the importance of LGBTQ diversity and inclusion in Mexico's workplaces

by developing consulting and education models for Mexican companies and organizations. It is the first of its kind outside the U.S. for the HRC Foundation, which worked closely with Fernando Velázquez and Francisco Robledo of FVConsulting — Consultores en Diversidad e Inclusión and Alianza por la Diversidad e Inclusión Laboral. The program will focus on the adoption of non-discrimination policies, creation of employee resource groups

and diversity and inclusion councils and engagement in public activities to support LGBTQ inclusion.

Major employers such as Citibank, Accenture, Google, Kellogg and Mastercard have already committed to participating in the new, groundbreaking HRC Equidad MX survey of Mexican businesses' LGBT-inclusive policies and practices. In the coming months, HRC Equidad MX will collect responses to the survey, which will run parallel to the HRC Foundation's annual Corporate Equality Index survey, and release the results this fall.

To learn more about HRC Equidad MX, visit hrc.im/equidadmx.



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TIME TO THRIVE

“THEY CAN CUT DOWN THE FLOWERS, BUT THEY CAN’T HOLD BACK THE SPRING. WE ARE THE SPRING OF JUSTICE.”



Dolores Huerta, civil rights hero and president of the Dolores Huerta Foundation at the HRC Foundation’s fourth annual Time to THRIVE Conference this spring. The conference addresses safety, inclusion and well-being for LGBTQ youth, and brings together educators and youth-serving

professionals to build awareness and cultural competency, learn current and emerging best practices and gather resources from leading experts and national organizations in the field.



More than 800 people hailing from 43 states and Denmark attended Time to THRIVE this spring. **Learn more at timetothrive.org.**

WELCOMING SCHOOLS: TRAINING A NEW CLASS OF EDUCATORS



WELCOMING SCHOOLS, THE HRC FOUNDATION’S PREMIER PROGRAM DEDICATED TO CREATING RESPECTFUL AND SUPPORTIVE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, IS PROUD

to announce the completion of its second-ever National Facilitator Certification Training. The purpose of the FCT is to cultivate professional development experts across the country who can facilitate Welcoming Schools training modules to assist schools in becoming more inclusive and welcoming for all students.

This group of educators, activists and advocates headed to HRC headquarters in June for four days of intensive training in the Welcoming Schools approach. The highly skilled, talented cohort included participants from 16 states, as well as the first internationally based facilitators from Mexico.

These new facilitators have returned to their communities ready to deliver Welcoming Schools professional development modules on embracing family diversity, creating LGBTQ-inclusive schools, preventing bias-based bullying, creating gender-inclusive schools and supporting transgender and non-binary students. This training has been shown to decrease bullying in schools as it promotes the acceptance of diversity — inclusive of gender and LGBTQ diversity — among staff and students.

The Welcoming Schools program is growing. By adding these 22 facilitators to its nationwide network, Welcoming Schools expects to triple its capacity to serve schools and youth-serving organizations around the country, providing professional development, information and resources into the hands of educators who so desperately need it. Thanks to the FCT, Welcoming Schools is that much closer to its goal of safe and supportive schools for all children.

To learn more about the training or Welcoming Schools, visit welcomingschools.org.

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HRC RISING

EXPANDING HRC'S GRASSROOTS ARMY FOR 2018 AND BEYOND

by Carolyn Simon

HRC's unprecedented counterattack against President Trump's agenda of hate can be described in three bold words: **Unite. Resist. Enlist.**

In July, HRC unveiled HRC Rising, a bold, proactive national campaign for 2018 and beyond. It is the largest grassroots mobilization in the organization's history — a campaign to resist the politics of hate, fight anti-LGBTQ legislation, and fuel pro-equality candidates and initiatives in all 50 states.

It builds on the momentum of our Summer of Action, which we kicked off in June by bringing more than 5,000 supporters to HRC's headquarters in Washington, D.C.,

to engage in direct action, from grassroots advocacy training and writing letters to elected officials, to unique social media opportunities.

That same weekend, we turned out thousands of HRC supporters to the National #EqualityMarch in D.C., the #ResistMarch in L.A., and dozens of sister marches around the country. Nearly 30,000 people took part in our virtual Equality March.

We sent a message that we are here, we are united and we are not backing down.

"It's not enough to resist the hateful policies and attacks

coming from the Trump-Pence regime. We've got to accelerate the pace of progress toward full equality and secure protections for LGBTQ people in states and communities across the country," said HRC President Chad Griffin. "The power and determination of the 10 million LGBTQ voters and our allies across America will only continue to grow stronger in the face of discriminatory attacks on our rights and freedoms."

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We turned out thousands of HRC supporters to the National #EqualityMarch in D.C., the #ResistMarch in L.A. and dozens of sister marches around the country.

Photo: Larry French / AP



Since the moment he walked into the Oval Office, Donald Trump has attacked our progress and undermined the rights of countless Americans. HRC and its members and supporters are leading the charge in resistance efforts.



HRC Rising *cont'd* from p. 9

ON-THE-GROUND ORGANIZING

There are 10 million LGBTQ voters in the United States according to Gallup, and in 2016 the LGBTQ voting bloc was the only demographic group that turned out at a higher percentage for Hillary Clinton than former President Barack Obama four years earlier. Comprising approximately 5 percent of the total vote in recent presidential elections according to *New York Times* and NBC News exit polls, the LGBTQ vote and our millions of allies can make the difference for pro-equality candidates all across the country. Heading into the midterm elections in 2018 and then on to the general election in 2020, HRC aims to organize and mobilize like never before to do just that — sending anti-equality candidates packing on Election Day.

In one of the only bright spots on election night last year, then-Gov. Pat McCrory lost his re-election bid in North Carolina because he signed the dangerous anti-transgender HB2. HRC worked tirelessly with partner organizations in-state to unseat him, and this success provides a model for our work across the nation.

"We are seeing more activism than we have ever seen in our organization's 37-year history," Griffin said. "We intend to harness that energy."

As part of HRC Rising, HRC has begun recruiting at least 20 additional full-time staff, including dedicated political, field, grassroots organizing, volunteer engagement, communications and digital staff, who will join more than two dozen existing staff working on the initiative. What's more, HRC's new and existing members and supporters will be leading the charge to increase local advocacy participation and increase voter contact capacity to help turn out the vote in 2018 and 2020.

JOIN THE RESISTANCE

HRC is a tour de force in digital organizing, with a reach of nearly 7 million people. It is one of the organization's greatest strengths, and we need each and every one of you to take action online in the fight for equality.

You've already proven you can make an impact:

35 MILLION

People who have watched HRC's resistance videos



7 MILLION

Size of HRC's digital grassroots army

18.1 MILLION

People who joined us to #UniteResistEnlist online during HRC's Weekend of Action

2

Minutes it takes to become an online advocate! Follow @HRC on Twitter, @HumanRightsCampaign on Facebook and Instagram and @WeAreHRC on Snapchat



EVERY ACTION MATTERS

During the 2016 presidential election season, HRC's volunteers committed a staggering 50,000 hours contacting voters and fundraising for candidates. Despite this, our amazing volunteers continue to ask, "What more can we do?"

HRC volunteer leaders are the backbone of the organization. They are invaluable in the fight for full equality for LGBTQ people. Volunteer engagement as we expand HRC Rising will be more important than ever.

Coming soon, HRC will have a new opportunity for members who want to take the next step. Like our Steering Committee volunteer leaders, these super volunteers will be connected directly with HRC staff and volunteers about unique opportunities to take action. Make sure you are following HRC on social media to learn more as details are revealed.

These volunteer leaders will have three main goals: recruit new members and supporters, keep these new activists engaged in advocacy efforts, and expand volunteer impact on important initiatives such as political campaigns, increasing the visibility of the LGBTQ community and educating the public about issues that affect LGBTQ individuals.

In addition to expanding our current volunteer communities, we will be embarking on a plan to organize new HRC steering committees, especially in 2018 priority states that currently don't have them in their major metro areas.

FIVE WAYS YOU CAN HELP:

- 1** **Text "RISING" to 30644.** By joining, you'll be up to date on the latest LGBTQ news, actions and resources available.

- 2** **Visit hrc.im/Rising and join our community of more than 3 million** highly engaged members, supporters, volunteers and activists in pledging your support for equality.

- 3** **Call, write and visit your elected representatives when asked.** Find more than a dozen ways to make a difference at hrc.org/help.

- 4** **Get your friends, family and colleagues to take action** in supporting LGBTQ legislation and voting for pro-equality candidates. You can also contact your member of Congress by texting MY CONGRESS to 30644. Check out our congressional scorecard on elected officials' LGBTQ voting records.

- 5** **Don't just vote during presidential elections.** Pledge to vote in every election, including the upcoming 2018 cycle!

We are resisting the politics of hate by fighting anti-LGBTQ legislation and legislators across the nation. We're going on offense with the largest grassroots expansion ever because we simply can't afford to wait. Never underestimate the power of your voice and actions to effect change. 🇺🇸



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A FIGHT WE MUST WIN

HOW HRC IS LEADING THE CHARGE AGAINST TRUMP'S ASSAULT ON TRANS TROOPS

By Carolyn Simon

On a Wednesday morning in late July, thousands of transgender troops across the country woke up to a series of tweets from their commander in chief, announcing he would be reinstating a ban prohibiting them from serving in the military.

As with "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," Trump's ban could result in the discharge of as many as 15,000 transgender Americans currently serving our country with honor.

"After consultation with my Generals and military experts, please be advised that the United States Government will not accept or allow ... Transgender individuals to serve in any capacity in the U.S. Military," Trump tweeted. "Our military must be focused on decisive and overwhelming ... victory and cannot be burdened with the tremendous medical costs and disruption that transgender in the military would entail. Thank you."

The day before Donald Trump sent these tweets, Adm. Mike Mullen, former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told Congress, "There is no reason to single out these brave men and women and deny them the medical care that they require."

What's more, the Pentagon did not recommend the ban and was unaware of Trump's intentions to make the announcement.

But as he often does, Trump ignored the facts, he ignored the generals and he ignored reality.



IMPACT & COST OF TRANSGENDER TROOPS

A 2016 study commissioned by the Department of Defense and performed by the RAND Corporation found that allowing transgender people to serve openly would "cost little and have no significant impact on unit readiness." In June 2016, a month after the study's results were released, Defense Secretary Ashton Carter announced that transgender service members would be allowed to serve openly — effective immediately.

The Obama administration's historic announcement positioned the U.S.

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HOW HRC DEFEATED MARK GREEN



HRC's #StopMarkGreen Campaign Exposes His Shameful History

In 2011, with the stroke of his pen, President Obama ended the shameful policy, “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” that had codified discrimination against LGBTQ service members for nearly two decades. A few years later, President Obama helped make history again when he appointed Eric Fanning, the first openly gay Army secretary to lead the nation’s oldest and largest branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. Last year, under President Obama’s leadership once again, the Pentagon lifted a ban on transgender troops serving openly in the military.

Just one year later, Donald Trump and Mike Pence are steering our country — and our military — in a much more precarious direction for LGBTQ service members. The administration’s recent move to ban qualified transgender people from serving in the military comes just four months after Trump’s nomination of Mark Green — an ultra right-wing, anti-LGBTQ state senator from Tennessee — to be the nation’s next secretary of the Army.

After news of Green’s nomination broke in March, HRC sprang into action and led a campaign to #StopMarkGreen. HRC unearthed footage of Green at events smearing transgender people, describing President Obama’s guidance protecting

transgender students as an example of “tyrannical government,” calling being transgender a “disease” and encouraging Tennessee officials to defy the Supreme Court’s marriage equality ruling. As a Tennessee state senator, Green supported legislation giving businesses a license to discriminate against LGBTQ people, sponsored an anti-transgender bill and opposed state non-discrimination protections based on sexual orientation or gender identity. HRC President Chad Griffin called his

participated in our social media campaign to expose his history of attacks on LGBTQ people, Muslims, women and others. HRC led more than 40 other civil rights organizations on a letter to the Senate Armed Services Committee opposing the nomination.

Thanks to HRC’s supporters in every state, Mark Green’s Republican support in the Senate crumbled, and he was forced to withdraw.

“It would have been a disgrace to the Army and every soldier who serves

“IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A DISGRACE TO THE ARMY AND EVERY SOLDIER WHO SERVES TO SEE MARK GREEN SERVING AS THEIR LEADER.”

— **Stephen Peters**, HRC’s National Press Secretary

track record “disqualifying for any public servant, let alone someone wishing to serve as secretary of the Army.”

HRC members and supporters made more than 25,000 calls and emails to senators urging them to oppose Green’s nomination. More than 2 million people watched our video on Mark Green’s record, and millions more

to see Mark Green serving as their leader,” says Stephen Peters, HRC’s National Press Secretary and Marine veteran who was discharged under “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.” “Green’s nomination posed considerable threat to all our progress and to countless LGBTQ service members who put their lives on the line for their country.” 🇺🇸

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GRASSROOTS RESISTANCE

HOW VICTOR LIM — AND VOLUNTEERS LIKE HIM — ARE DRIVING HRC'S RESISTANCE EFFORTS

By Carolyn Simon

It was HRC's iconic logo that helped inspire Victor Lim to get involved as a volunteer with the organization about five years ago.

Despite being surrounded by a supportive family, when he came out as a teenager in Virginia in the 2000s, he felt isolated and alone. But when he saw the blue square with the yellow equal sign — on car bumpers, on store windows, on T-shirts — he knew that there were many more people out there like him, and he took great comfort in that.

But it's the people Lim has met along the way who have motivated him to step up as a leader with HRC in Chicago, one of more than two dozen HRC volunteer-led steering committees in metropolitan areas across the country.

"What has kept me going is knowing that we are really making a difference. I can see it in the day-to-day work we do," Lim said. "When I'm working at a pride booth, people will thank me for doing what I do. It means a lot to them."

Lim, who is now 33 years old, started out mainly going to social events that doubled as fundraisers. The prospect of meeting new people was hugely appealing to him.

"I was looking for friends, but I found a family," he said.

Lim quickly became more and more involved — from phone banking, to working on election campaigns, to staffing booths at more than 20 pride events. He's been a co-chair of HRC's Chicago gala, ran several marathons while raising money as part of HRC's Athletes for Equality program, phone banked for state and federal political candidates and more.

"At some point, my volunteer work with HRC changed from something in which I put my extra time, into a true passion," Lim says. "I realized this is something that I want to put my heart into."

These days, Lim is a member of HRC's National Board of Governors — in that role, he is part of HRC's local leadership team in Chicago responsible for growing HRC's membership, raising necessary financial resources to fund our fight and engaging in a host of community engagement activities that include legislative advocacy, election engagement, community inclusion and public education efforts. He works directly with HRC staff to increase the reach of HRC in Chicago.

"Victor, like all other volunteers with HRC, is finding himself at the epicenter of today's activism — by adapting to lead the fight locally with HRC's resistance

actions, showing up and bringing others to participate in actions led by coalition partners for issues that also impact the everyday lives of LGBTQ people," said Frank November, HRC's Director of Volunteer Leadership and Strategic Development. "Victor is a great example of what it means to be a volunteer leader with the Human Rights Campaign today."

Interested in becoming an HRC volunteer or volunteer leader in your community? Here are three things you can do today:

1 Join HRC in the fight for equality. Start by finding a committee near you at hrc.org/volunteer.

*If there isn't an HRC steering committee in your area, there are still plenty of ways to get involved.

2 Learn more about HRC's work in your local community at hrc.org/local.

3 Be a part of the change! Find more than a dozen ways to make a difference at hrc.org/help.

For more information about HRC's volunteer programs, please email volunteer@hrc.org. 🇺🇸



HRC is working side-by-side with coalition partners in Texas to defeat anti-transgender bills introduced in the Texas legislature during a special session.

STATE LEGISLATIVE UPDATE: WHERE WE STAND AGAINST HATE

By Nick Morrow

Since marriage equality became the law of the land in 2015, state legislatures across the United States have ratcheted up their attacks against LGBTQ people — and especially against transgender people. That's why HRC and our allies in Congress introduced the Equality Act in 2015 — and again in 2017 — in an effort to finally add LGBTQ people to our nation's federal civil rights laws. But until we have leaders in Congress who'll allow a vote on the Equality Act, and a president who'd sign it into law, we'll continue to face efforts to undermine our rights in state legislatures across the nation.

In 2017, the onslaught of anti-LGBTQ state bills has continued; nearly 140 bills were introduced in dozens of states — a dramatic uptick from the previous legislative cycle. While the majority of these bills were defeated before making it to a governor's desk, nine were signed into law.

The effort to legalize discrimination has been particularly intense in Texas, where the Texas legislature has earned the odious distinction of introducing the highest number of anti-LGBTQ bills in the United States during this year's regular legislative session. In that time, Texas lawmakers introduced a whopping 31 anti-LGBTQ bills, with 11 passing at least one chamber — either the State Senate or House. To put that into perspective: only 13 bills passed through any state legislative chamber in the rest of the United States combined.

UNDER ATTACK IN TEXAS

Lawmakers succeeded in passing two laws attacking LGBTQ Texans, both of which were spearheaded by the state's lieutenant governor and former conservative talk radio show host, Dan Patrick. Despite the urging of major business groups, child welfare leaders, faith leaders, and their own constituents, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott signed

HB 3859 — codifying discrimination into law. The new law allows child welfare organizations, including adoption and foster care agencies, to turn away qualified Texans seeking to care for a child in need, including LGBTQ couples, interfaith couples, single parents, married couples in which one prospective parent has previously been divorced, or other parents to whom the agency has a religious objection. He also signed into law a ridesharing bill that has a completely unrelated, tacked-on amendment designed to discriminate against transgender people.

But the effort to discriminate hasn't stopped there.

In June, Gov. Abbott announced the convening of a special session of the Texas legislature with the stated goal of passing more laws undermining the rights of LGBTQ people. As a result, Texas is embroiled in a costly special session, during which legislators have proposed measures to rip away existing civil rights protections from nearly 5

million Texans and target transgender people for discrimination.

HRC is fighting back alongside Equality Texas, ACLU of Texas, Texas Freedom Network, and the Transgender Education Network of Texas, as well as businesses, educators and allies across the state. Our on-the-ground organizers across the state are mobilizing our grassroots army and working around the clock through the special session to fight back, speak out, and lift up the voices of our members and fair-minded Texans from all walks of life who oppose efforts to legislate discrimination.

Top Texas-based companies — from American Airlines to Texas Instruments — are also speaking out to say with one voice that discrimination is bad for business. And major national companies — including IBM, AT&T, Google, Facebook, Apple and others — have already laid down a marker: Any attack on transgender people is unacceptable and would harm their ability to do business in Texas.

From the editorial pages of the *Washington Post* to articles in the *Dallas Morning News* and the *Texas Tribune*, news outlets are exposing Texas's dangerous and blatant efforts to discriminate for political gain. Some lawmakers in Texas are attempting to make the state a leader in discrimination, but HRC is fighting tooth and nail against each harmful bill.

DISCRIMINATION IN MISSISSIPPI

For more than a year, HRC has been fighting HB 1523 — a Mississippi license to discriminate law that was passed last year and became the subject of a court challenge. Unfortunately, after a panel of judges at the Fifth Circuit cleared the way for it to take effect, this law will soon go into effect and become the worst anti-LGBTQ state law in the country. Deceptively titled the “Protecting Freedom of Conscience from Government Discrimination Act,” it enables almost any individual or organization to use religion as a justification to discriminate against LGBTQ Mississippians at work, at school and in their communities. Nevertheless, the tide on public opinion is turning — and working with communities, municipalities, schools, businesses and faith organizations — HRC is working to fight back and expand protections for LGBTQ people across the state. In both Jackson, Miss., and the Republican stronghold of Magnolia, Miss., HRC helped pass city-wide nondiscrimination ordinances this past year — despite the HB 1523 law.

GOING ON OFFENSE

We're not just fighting back — we're going on offense to advance the pace of progress in other states coast to coast.

Over the last few months, governors and state legislators in Connecticut, New Mexico, Nevada and Rhode Island

have helped us make significant strides toward protecting LGBTQ youth by enacting bills outlawing the dangerous practice of “conversion therapy.” Nevada also enacted a bill that would extend protections to LGBTQ children in child welfare and juvenile detention facilities by requiring foster parents to be trained on working with LGBTQ youth. It would also require state and local agencies and facilities to treat a child in accordance to their gender identity.

In Colorado, the passage of a bill with bipartisan support has extended protections to include LGBTQ people and those with disabilities in the state's existing hate-crime laws. Illinois and Oregon have cleared the way to make the process easier for transgender people to change their gender identity on their birth certificates. Utah's governor also signed a measure that repealed a controversial law forbidding discussion in classrooms that could be construed as “promotion” of LGBTQ issues.

These are signs of progress that help continue our momentum in the fight for full equality. But ultimately, until we pass the federal Equality Act and eliminate the patchwork of laws that leave LGBTQ people vulnerable to discrimination in a majority of states, we are going to have to keep fighting efforts to legislate away our fundamental rights.

Find out more about legislation in your home state — and how you can get involved — at HRC.org. 🏳️‍🌈



With transgender rights under attack in Texas, HRC and its members and supporters are standing up and fighting back.

#EyesOnChechnya

#EyesOnChechnya Timeline:

April 1:

The Russian newspaper *Novaya Gazeta* reports that more than 100 men suspected of being gay or bisexual have been detained and tortured in Chechnya since early February.

April 4:

HRC President Chad Griffin sends letter to Secretary of State Rex Tillerson calling on the Trump administration to condemn Chechen actions and raise violations with Russia during upcoming visit. ↓



April 12:

Thousands of HRC members respond to an Action Alert calling on Trump administration to decry Chechen crackdown.

April 17:

U.S. United Nations Ambassador Nikki Haley speaks out against the atrocities. ↓



April 25:

A British Parliament member tells the Parliament that Chechen leaders plan to "eliminate" the country's gay community by start of Ramadan.

May 7:

Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov claims there are no LGBTQ Chechens.

May 9:

HRC, Amnesty International and Human Rights First rally outside the Russian ambassador's residence. ↓



May 15:

HRC pens an op-ed calling further attention to the situation and connecting it with the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOT) on May 17.

In Russia, simply talking positively about LGBTQ people is illegal. Dozens of gay and bisexual men are fleeing after authorities arrested and beat more than 100 men suspected of being gay or bisexual in Chechnya — an independent republic with the Russian Federation. At least three Chechen men — and possibly as many as 20 — have been murdered in the detention-style camps. Despite widespread public outcry, President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Rex Tillerson thus far have admitted they've not raised the issue with their Russian counterparts.

"Horror doesn't begin to describe what has happened in Chechnya. While Donald Trump has praised Putin's brutal leadership, he has not joined government leaders like Prime Minister Trudeau, Chancellor Merkel or President Marcon in holding the Russian government accountable for this crime. It's sickening," said Ty Cobb, director of HRC Global.

Chechnya is currently under Russian control and Russian President Vladimir Putin nominated the leader of the republic, Ramzan Kadyrov, in 2007. Kadyrov has been called "the Putin of Chechnya."

Like Russia, Chechnya is hostile to LGBTQ people, but international human rights experts say what's happening there now is unprecedented.

According to multiple reports by the media and regional advocates, the so-called "cleansing" began as early as February. Once a suspect was identified, authorities would detain countless more by threatening detainees or accessing their social media accounts. Escapees tell of being brutally assaulted in prison. Others who hadn't yet been detained fled Chechnya for fear they'd be exposed by a friend.

In a chilling interview with NPR, one 18-year-old gay man recounted how he was dropped on his family's doorstep, unconscious and in a burlap bag after going missing. It was then that authorities told his family he was gay, prompting his uncle to violently grab him by the neck. According to a cousin, the uncle stopped only because his nephew was already near death. He spent two weeks in a coma. Upon waking in the hospital, he learned his family was disowning him. But the young man still fears his uncle will return to kill him.

"This fear is sadly all too real in a country where honor killings are a reality," said Cobb. "Our partners at the Russian LGBT Network have helped close to 40 men flee Chechnya, equally fearing the brutality of the Chechen regime and their own families.

As soon as news broke of the brutal crackdown, HRC sprung to

action — reaching out to the Russian LGBT Network to learn how HRC could support their efforts. HRC President Chad Griffin immediately sent a letter to Secretary Tillerson, which urged Tillerson to take action and condemn the atrocities occurring in Chechnya. The HRC Foundation also launched its #EyesOnChechnya campaign with Human Rights First, which has raised the visibility of the issue and provided an opportunity for global influencers and HRC's members to take action to support LGBTQ Chechens.

In late May, reports surfaced that Russia had launched a credible investigation, yet countless men are still detained in Chechnya while others are hiding out in Russia, still vulnerable to prosecution by an anti-LGBTQ regime. According to BuzzFeed News, at least nine men have been granted visas outside of Russia, yet advocates have said U.S. visas remain "out of reach."

Cobb added, "Let's not forget that the few times Donald Trump has mentioned LGBTQ people, it's been under the guise of protecting us from extremists. Mr. President, what's happening in Chechnya is just about as extreme as it gets. The crimes must be stopped, the survivors must be given refuge and support, and the perpetrators must be held accountable." 🇺🇸

May 17:

With help from HRC, more than 35 members of Congress record and disseminate Chechnya-focused videos marking IDAHOT. ↓

May 22:

HRC's president sends second letter to Secretary Tillerson asking him to welcome LGBTQ Chechens to the U.S. through any means possible, and once again asking him to condemn the atrocities in Chechnya.

May 26:

Ramadan begins.

May 28:

Buzzfeed reports 9 men have been granted visas out of Russia, though U.S. remains "out of reach."

June 13:

HRC blasts Secretary Tillerson following his admission that he's not raised the issue with Russian counterparts and has no idea if President Trump has addressed it with Putin. ↓



June 27:

The U.S. House of Representatives passes a bipartisan resolution condemning the atrocities in Chechnya. The resolution was led by Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, who was joined by 20 Republicans and 65 Democrats.



July 7

HRC urges Trump to raise concerns about Chechnya in a meeting with Putin at the G-20 Summit in Germany. It remains unclear if Trump addresses the issue.

For updates as news breaks and action items to help the victims and end the atrocities, visit www.hrc.org/chechnya.



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Photos: Larry French / AP

Christine Leinonen, mother of Christopher "Drew" Leinonen, joined more than 150 attendees at a twilight ceremony at HRC's headquarters in honor of Drew and the 48 other lives taken at the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando one year ago.

REMEMBERING THE PULSE NIGHTCLUB VICTIMS AND VOWING TO #HONOR THEM WITH ACTION

By Grace Smith

It has been a year since Christine Leinonen's son, Christopher "Drew" Leinonen, was taken in the Pulse nightclub shooting in Orlando. In a twilight ceremony at HRC's headquarters on June 9, Christine stood with more than 150 attendees, as the community paid tribute and pledged to honor Drew — and 48 others whose lives were taken that night — with action.

As the sun set, world-renowned artist Megan Geckler unveiled a monumental tribute to those killed in an art installation titled "49." On the facade of the HRC building, Geckler illuminated 49 white fabric banners representing the lives taken in Orlando encircled by a rainbow structure referencing both the LGBTQ movement's iconic flag and the community's continuing embrace of those taken during the violence at Pulse. Wrapped around the building were the names of the 49 victims, serving as deep and powerful reminders to say their names and never forget.

During the twilight ceremony,



after the 49 names were read aloud, singer Laura Lebron-Rojas sung in both Spanish and English as Geckler's art installation lit up for the first time. The event not only drew in the surrounding community, but also a community across the nation who were able to participate virtually through Facebook Live, and interact with the artwork through a

360-degree video experience. Through an HRC video, Pulse survivor Angel Colon shared what it meant to move on after such a tragedy.

HRC keeps all those affected by the Pulse shooting in our hearts and will continue to honor the victims with action by fighting for a world that is safe for and inclusive of all. 🇺🇸

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Bród 자부심 Duma Hrdost الفخر
الفخر Pride เกียรติยศ Orgulho
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الفخر Pride เกียรติยศ Orgulho
Duma சுய மரியாதை Pride
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プライド Υπερηφάνεια ΠΙΛΛΑ

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DONALD TRUMP HAS PROVEN HIMSELF AS UNPATRIOTIC AS HE IS UNFIT TO SERVE AS COMMANDER IN CHIEF. HE HAS PUT A TARGET ON THE BACKS OF THE MORE THAN 15,000 TRANSGENDER TROOPS PROUDLY SERVING IN OUR MILITARY.” — HRC PRESIDENT CHAD GRIFFIN

A Fight We Must Win *cont'd from p. 13*

military to be able to recruit and retain the very best candidates, rather than discharging highly trained, talented transgender service members for no other reason than who they are.

The impact was far-reaching: According to the Williams Institute, there are an estimated 15,500 actively serving transgender members of the U.S. military. Thousands of transgender people have served with honor and distinction in our military, including more than 134,000 transgender veterans who are alive today.

But, once again, President Trump has put our progress in the crosshairs.

“Donald Trump has proven himself as unpatriotic as he is unfit to serve as commander in chief. He has put a target on the backs of the more than 15,000 transgender troops proudly serving in our military,” said HRC President Chad Griffin. “This heinous and disgusting action endangers the lives of American service members, undermines military readiness and makes our country less safe. It is also the latest effort by Trump and Mike Pence to undo our progress and drag LGBTQ people back into the closet by using our lives as political pawns.”

BIPARTISAN OPPOSITION

Dozens of members of Congress on both sides of the aisle called out Trump for his bigotry and countered his argu-



ments against military service by transgender people. The Republican backlash was swift and severe.

“You ought to treat everybody fairly and give everybody a chance to serve,” Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., told CNN.

Sen. Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, affirmed on Twitter that he stands with transgender Utahns.

“I don’t think we should be discriminating against anyone,” Hatch said. “Transgender people are people, and deserve the best we can do for them.”

Sens. John McCain, R-Ariz., Joni Ernst, R-Iowa, Thom Tillis, R-N.C., Dan Sullivan, R-Alaska, and others are firmly opposed to the ban and said that anyone who is capable of serving should be allowed to do so.

Democratic members of Congress, including longtime supporters of LGBTQ equality such as U.S. Reps. Nancy Pelosi, Mark Takano, Joe Kennedy III, and more,

went on the offensive.

“The president just went on Twitter to attack 15,000 trans service members who are risking their lives to protect our freedom. How brave,” Takano wrote.

“@POTUS has shown his conduct is driven not by honor, decency, or national security, but by prejudice,” Pelosi tweeted.

Governors, other elected officials, business leaders and celebrities also stood up and spoke out in support of transgender service members.

But perhaps no one put it better than former Army Secretary Eric Fanning, the first openly gay leader of a branch of our armed forces. “We’ve heard this before, including when Truman announced integration 69 years ago. It has been proven wrong each time,” Fanning said. “Trans people already serve capably and honorably. We must stand together to protect trans troops against discrimination.” 🇺🇸



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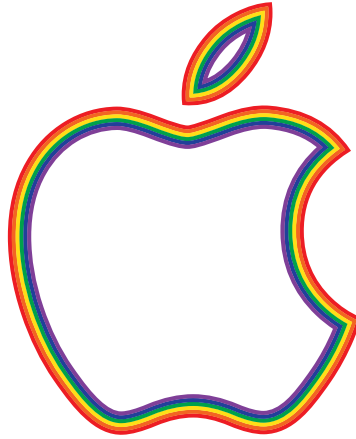
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DURING HRC'S SUMMER OF ACTION 30,000 of you joined our virtual pride march alongside the thousands who took to the streets, **15,000** of you advocated for health care, and more than **26,000** of you proudly pledged to continue the fight for LGBTQ civil rights.

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THE POWER OF MONTHLY GIVING.

An incredible **85,000** of you are currently giving monthly as **Partners** and **Federal Club** members.

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nomination of Mark Green as Army Secretary ... we organized and led a sustained effort to prevent millions of Americans from losing their health care ... and mobilized our staff, volunteers and members in states across the country to stop over 100 anti-LGBTQ bills from becoming law.

Your financial and moral support means the world to us, and we are honored to have you by our side during this challenging time.

If we can do anything to improve your membership experience, or if you need to make any adjustments to your membership information, please reach out at **membership@hrc.org**.

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CURRENT AS OF JUNE 1, 2017

HRC'S GALA EVENTS

CLEVELAND DINNER

AUGUST 26, 2017

- Hilton Cleveland Downtown
- Shawn Wolfe, Dabney Conwell & Rick Taylor
- hrclevelandgala.com

SEATTLE DINNER

SEPTEMBER 9, 2017

- Sheraton Seattle Hotel
- Suzanne Sullivan & Chris Kattenhorn
- hrc.org/boxoffice

TWIN CITIES DINNER

SEPTEMBER 16, 2017

- Minneapolis Convention Center
- K. Jason Bryan & Jeanine Mlynek
- hrc.org/twincitiesdinner

ST. LOUIS DINNER

SEPTEMBER 23, 2017

- Union Station Hotel
- Elizabeth Schlesinger & David Stetter
- hrcstlouis.com

NEW ENGLAND DINNER

OCTOBER 7, 2017

- Seaport Hotel & WTC
- Paul Mataras, Nancy Stager & Javier Barrientos
- hrcnewengland.org

SAN FRANCISCO DINNER

OCTOBER 14, 2017

- Westin St. Francis
- Christine Lehtonen & Jim Murphy
- sfhrcgala.org

NATIONAL DINNER

OCTOBER 28, 2017

- Washington Convention Center
- Bruce Rohr & Rachael Gresson
- hrcnationaldinner.org

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THE COLD CASE OF AN LGBTQ PIONEER

MARSHA P. JOHNSON DOCUMENTARY EXAMINES THE TRANSGENDER ICON'S ACTIVISM — AND THE MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING HER DEATH

By Carolyn Simon

The Stonewall riots were a pivotal act of resistance for the LGBTQ community — and right in the thick of it was Marsha P. Johnson, “The Rosa Parks of the LGBTQ Movement.”

While some reports indicate that Johnson threw the first brick that led to the uprising, there's no disputing her role in the fight for equality. But outside of the LGBTQ community, the stories of Johnson and Sylvia Rivera, a fellow LGBTQ pioneer and transgender woman of color, are rarely told. The pair were among a small group of people who started meeting while the ashes of Stonewall were still hot. They both founded Street Transvestites Action Revolutionaries and later created the S.T.A.R. House, which provided food and shelter for LGBTQ youth. They were among founders of the Gay Liberation Front.

They marched for justice, they organized, they resisted. Both died far too young — Johnson in 1992, under mysterious circumstances, and Rivera a decade later, of complications from liver cancer.

Their stories are being told today, in *The Death and Life of Marsha P. Johnson*, a new documentary by director David France (*How to Survive a Plague*) — and to a much wider audience, thanks to a partnership with Netflix.

Framed as a whodunit, the documentary traces Johnson's life as an activist and a cultural icon. Her body was found floating in the Hudson River in July 1992 and her death was originally ruled a suicide by the New York Police Department. But Johnson is described by those who knew her as vivacious and upbeat and they rebut the notion that she would have taken her own life.

“Marsha's political tool was happiness ... she used happiness as a way to organize people, a way to motivate people, a way to support people who were in terrible need of support who were not getting it elsewhere,” said France. “That ability to use a strident cheeriness was remarkable and it's what really set her apart from any other historical figure that I can think of.”

Using archival footage, interviews with friends and family members and a private investigation by transgender activist Victoria Cruz, who was determined to find justice for Johnson as the 25th anniversary of her death approached, the documentary probes other theories about Johnson's death.

Was Johnson killed by the mafia? Was she being chased and either fell or jumped into the river and accidentally died? Police didn't know — and didn't care to find out.

In a chilling reminder of how little progress has been made, the investigation into Johnson's death is juxtaposed against the brutal murder of Islan Nettles, a trans woman of color who was brutally beaten to death in New York in 2013. Her killer confessed and received a 12-year prison sentence.

“That was a case that had all the hallmarks of the problems of how society in general and how law enforcement and the justice community has been in particular dealing with problems of violence against the trans community,” France said. “To be a trans woman in society today is to be on the very, very outer margins of civic life.”

It's something that Rivera recognized and fought against until the very end of her life.



“Sylvia and Marsha were among mothers and fathers of movement, but they were also ejected from the movement in 1973 when the gathering leadership at the time determined that for the strategy that they were pursuing, it was important to look like everybody else. This is largely a white, male leadership — cisgender entirely,” said France. “They felt that if they jettisoned people who were challenging standards, they would have a better chance of gaining their rights. It was really a craven move that distanced the Ls and Gs from Ts. That was an injury to Sylvia and Marsha that Sylvia never really recovered from. She took that anger and disappointment with her to the grave.”

Yet Johnson, Rivera, Cruz and countless others after them took up the charge to build bridges within the LGBTQ community. There is still so much more work to be done. At least 15 transgender people have been murdered in 2017 — almost all of them trans women of color. We must join together and take a stand against hate.

“The film is another example of our long tradition of resistance,” said France. “We see in Marsha Johnson and Sylvia Rivera the fortitude of the human spirit and the ability to endure, to recoup, to reorganize and ultimately to gain victory ... We do triumph. We will triumph.”

The Death and Life of Marsha P. Johnson will begin airing on Netflix on October 6. 🇺🇸

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