
Global Respect Act

Supporters: Human Rights Campaign, the Council for Global Equality, Human Rights First, PFLAG National, American Jewish World Service, and Global Rights

There is an alarming trend of violence and discrimination directed at LGBT individuals around the world. Every year, thousands of individuals are targeted for harassment, attack, arrest, and murder on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity. Many who commit crimes against LGBT individuals do so with complete impunity.

In 2013, Russia enacted a ban on arbitrarily-defined “homosexual propaganda,” endangering the position of many LGBT persons and their allies. India’s Supreme Court overturned a lower court ruling and reinstated the nation’s criminalization of homosexuality in the world’s second largest country. Nigeria went even further by passing a law criminalizing the actions of those who simply associate with LGBT individuals. Recently, Brunei joined the most notorious of discriminatory countries by introducing a new penal code that will phase in the death penalty for homosexual acts over the upcoming several years.

The effects of these legislative and penal measures extend beyond parliaments and prisons—they have a chilling effect measured in assaults, blackmail, harassment, and murder. Following the passage of the Anti-homosexuality Bill in Uganda, documented cases of violence and persecution increased from single to triple digits in a matter of months.

Legislative Summary:

The **Global Respect Act** would ensure that violators of the human rights of LGBT individuals worldwide are not permitted to travel to the U.S. Specifically, it would:

- Require the Administration to send Congress biannually a list of foreign persons responsible for, complicit in, or who incited extrajudicial killing, torture, or other gross violations of human rights based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity;
- Deny or rescind visas to individuals placed on the list, with waivers for national security or to allow attendance at the United Nations;
- Allow for a person to be removed from the list if the President determines that credible information exists that the person did not engage in the alleged activity, has paid an appropriate consequence for the behavior, or if the person has credibly demonstrated a significant change in behavior;
- Require a section on LGBT international human rights in the annual State Department Report on Human Rights; and
- Require the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor to designate a staffer responsible for tracking violence, criminalization, and restrictions on the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms in foreign countries based on actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

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