

INSIGHTS + NEWS

Leaked Draft Executive Order to Respect Religious Freedom Disrespects the LGBTQ Community

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Last summer, Donald Trump received recognition for being the first Republican presidential nominee to mention the LGBTQ community in his acceptance speech. If you didn't actually listen to his speech or read the transcript, you may have read a headline or heard a sound bite that said something like "Trump vows to protect the LGBT community," and that may have brought you some comfort. A closer look at what he actually said in context, however, shows that the scope of the protection was limited to terrorist attacks.

"Only weeks ago, in Orlando, Florida, 49 wonderful Americans were savagely murdered by an Islamic terrorist. This time, the terrorist targeted the LGBTQ community. No good, and we're going to stop it. As your president, I will do everything in my power to protect our LGBTQ citizens from the violence and oppression of a hateful foreign ideology. Believe me."

Fast forward to January 2017, and Trump has been sworn in as president. He has set about drafting numerous executive orders purportedly aimed at protecting the American people—including by extension the LGBTQ community—from terrorist attacks. We all know by now how his the first executive order he signed on that front turned out. (Not good. Believe me). But what many people don't know is that at the same time the consternation about the "Travel Ban" was going on, another executive order targeting the LGBTQ community was apparently being vetted. The leaked draft order, entitled [Establishing a Government-Wide Initiative to Respect Religious Freedom](#) is alarming to say the least. As the Nation's Sarah Posner aptly states, the order "seeks to create wholesale exemptions for people and organizations who claim religious or moral objections to same-sex marriage, premarital sex, abortion, and trans identity, and it seeks to curtail women's access to contraception and abortion through the Affordable Care Act."

[The order was reportedly quashed by Ivanka Trump and Jared Kushner](#) a couple of weeks ago. That may be good news for the LGBTQ community for now, but amidst the flurry of executive orders enacted by the Presidential administration, it may only be a matter of time before this order resurfaces in another form. Stay tuned.