

TRANSADVOCATE

The Democratic Party's New LGBT "Equality" Agenda: Big Words, Short Arms

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Abstract

It's really interesting to see how mainstream cable newsmedia is lauding the Democratically-controlled 111th Congress for getting so much done. It's not entirely undeserved of course, but when one takes a close look at what actually did get done this past session of Congress in terms of protecting and ensuring equal civil rights for all [...]

Article

It's really interesting to see how mainstream cable newsmedia is lauding the Democratically-controlled 111th Congress for getting so much done. It's not entirely undeserved of course, but when one takes a close look at what actually did get done this past session of Congress in terms of protecting and ensuring equal civil rights for all Americans, we find that their actual results are really not quite as impressive as some would like us to believe.

The repeal of Don't Ask, Don't Tell is a great example of what I'm talking about here. Long overdue to be sure, but also only actually impacting the lives of just a tiny fraction of a single percent of the American LGBT workforce, just like the rest of the "progress" made on LGBT rights by this administration thus far, mainly by Executive Order of one form or another. What about the rest of us, the majority of the American LGBT workforce who work in the private sector or for state and local governments in areas of the country without laws which protect their LGBT citizens? Well, apparently neither the mainstream news media nor the Democratic Congressional leadership felt we were worthy of their attention over the last two years, so for the vast majority of LGBT American civilian workers and jobseekers things continue to be just as rough as they've ever been, even rougher in fact, what with the higher-than-normal number of straight job applicants and a lower-than-normal number of available jobs out there just in general.

Despite the Democratic Party leadership's seemingly almost continuous promises to introduce and vote on the Employment Non-Discrimination Act during the 111th Congress, when push came to shove left-wing pundit and politician alike wrapped themselves in the flag, focused in like a laser on the fight to protect just the miniscule fraction of LGBT Americans who work for the government, and patted themselves on the back for a job well done as the Democrats once again threw the bulk of the American LGBT workforce and our families back under the bus for at least another 2-4 years.

And so, once again a self-congratulatory Democratic Congress and Administration along with its attendant liberal mainstream media flotilla sails off into the sunset, flags flying so proudly and brass

buttons shining so brightly in the sun, leaving behind the bulk of the American LGBT workforce and our families, unnoticed, uncommented upon, unprotected.

Someone remind me please: Exactly when was all that "CHANGE" stuff supposed to kick in?

I don't know about you, but I'm having a really hard time seeing any actual differences between the way things were for the vast majority of LGBT American workers under Clinton and Bush and the way they are now, after two years of Mr. Fierce Advocate and Democratic control of both houses of Congress. I mean, sure, we've made some significant progress here and there at the state and local levels, but when it comes to the really big ticket federal items, the kind of legislation that can actually make a difference in people's lives, the kind we waited nearly a generation for the Democrats to have the necessary majorities in Congress and control of the White House to finally enact into law as they promised, unless you're one of the relative handful who's employed by the federal government in some capacity, the Obama Administration and the 111th Congress didn't deliver very much which will help make your life better as an LGBT American.

Yes, it's great that LGBT Americans are now protected by a federal hate crimes law. It's also great that for the first time in the history of our nation LGBT Americans are defined as a protected class under federal law. That happened in this Congress, and it's worthy of both notice and commendation. Thing is, since the protections of this law only kick in once a serious violent crime has been committed and an LGBT person is likely already seriously injured or dead, it's difficult to see this law as actually protecting anyone from anything. In the end, all the hate crimes law does is help ensure that the perpetrator of a hate crime serves a tougher, more just sentence than they would otherwise, and that those hate crimes are more accurately tracked by law enforcement officials than they had been in the past. It doesn't actually improve anyone's life or actually protect anyone from anything, it simply helps to balance the scales of justice once someone's life has already been made horribly worse or taken from them entirely, not at all the same thing.

Again, don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that the Democrats don't deserve credit for all that they did get accomplished in the 111th. At the same time, though, I also think that's it's important that we don't forget that the Democrats have once again failed to deliver on their promises for the vast majority of LGBT American working families, even though they swore up and down to us a thousand times that this time it would be different with firm control of both houses of Congress and the White House.

Once again, even with the political winds at their backs and firm control of the legislative agenda this time, the Democratic Congressional leadership and the White House still wimped out and took the easy, cowardly way out in advocating for basic civil rights for all Americans, and once again, American LGBT workers and our families will continue paying the price for their cowardice for years to come.

Have we finally had enough NOW?

Crossposted from Becky's Blog

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