

The Ghost of Chris Crain: Gayjacking the Hate Crimes Bill

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Published May 11, 2007 | Updated March 31, 2026

https://www.transadvocate.com/the-ghost-of-chris-crain-gayjacking-the-hate-crimes-bill_n_109.htm

Abstract

When Chris Crain left his position at Window Media, I thought the voice of “transjack” was dead. I couldn’t have been more wrong. Today the Washington Blade published an op-ed by a long time Democratic gay activist and Washington D.C. mayoral adviser, Peter Rosenstein. He writes: “On the eve of the House taking up the [...]

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When Chris Crain left his position at Window Media, I thought the voice of “transjack” was dead. I couldn’t have been more wrong. Today the Washington Blade published an op-ed by a long time Democratic gay activist and Washington D.C. mayoral adviser, Peter Rosenstein. He writes:

“On the eve of the House taking up the Hate Crimes Prevention Act it appeared that passage was not assured in this form. Republicans thought they figured out a way to strip the bill of the term “gender identity” and just the possibility of this appeared to leave our national gay organizations in a tizzy.”

In a tizzy? If the Human Rights Campaign was in a “tizzy,” it would seem that there is some question of whether or not they would support a bill without transgender protections. Peter rightfully asks:

“Could all of our national organizations -- HRC, National Gay & Lesbian Task Force and Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians & Gays (although they seem to have disappeared from the national scene in the last few years) -- that have been fighting for this bill for nearly 10 years actually say no to hate crimes protections for 30 million gays and lesbians in the nation, if we use the 10 percent figure, because transgender individuals were not in the bill? Will we see ENDA defeated for the same reason?”

[Figure] gayjacking.jpg

Unlike the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (which HRC has already publicly stated it would only support a transinclusive version of), HRC hasn’t ever publicly stated whether or not they would support a hate crimes bill that is not trans-inclusive. I think it’s a very good question to ask... are we one community or not?

“I can’t imagine telling staunch supporters like Ted Kennedy, Hillary Clinton, Harry Reid and others to vote against the Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Bill, as the Senate has named it, or potentially

ENDA, if they only have protections for 30 million gays and lesbians. Again, what have we been fighting for these last 10 years? Why have we been giving money to these organizations if not to make headway in gaining us rights and protections?"

Can YOU imagine any GLBT organization supporting a bill that doesn't support the ENTIRE community?

Suggested citation

Marti Abernathey. "The Ghost of Chris Crain: Gayjacking the Hate Crimes Bill." TransAdvocate, May 11, 2007.
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