

# ***THE DALLAS PRINCIPLES***

## **PREAMBLE**

**President Obama and Congress pledged to lead America in a new direction that included civil rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans. We now sit at a great moment in our history that inspires the nation to return to its highest ideals and greatest promise. We face a historic opportunity to obtain our full civil rights; this is the moment for change. No delay. No excuses.**

Nearly forty years ago, a diverse group of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people stood up to injustice at the Stonewall Inn in New York City. In doing so, they submitted themselves to bodily harm and criminal prosecution. Their demand was simple -- equal protection under the law.

Still today, full civil rights has eluded the same community that rioted forty years ago. Instead, untold sums of resources have been spent to divide our nation and turn our lives into a political football.

At several junctures in American history, the stars have aligned to deliver the promise of equal protection under the law to those previously denied. At this unique time in history, our nation must once again exercise the great tradition of making its people equal.

Justice has too long been delayed. A clear path toward full civil equality for the LGBT community is overdue and must come now.

Using fear and misunderstanding to justify discrimination is no longer acceptable in this nation. Those content with the way things are will be judged harshly by history. Those who do not actively advance these ideals or offer excuses will be judged just as harshly. Those who attempt to divide our community or to delay and deny action on civil equality, waiting for the right moment to arrive, will be held accountable.

We reject the idea that honoring the founding principles of our country is controversial. We believe in the inherent human dignity of all people. No longer will we submit our children, our family, our friends and ourselves as a political tool for any Party or ideology. A new day has arrived.

## **PRINCIPLES**

**The following eight guiding principles underlie our call to action. In order to achieve full civil rights now, we avow:**

1. Full civil rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals must be enacted now. Delay and excuses are no longer acceptable.
2. We will not leave any part of our community behind.
3. Separate is never equal.
4. Religious beliefs are not a basis upon which to affirm or deny civil rights.
5. The establishment and guardianship of full civil rights is a non-partisan issue.
6. Individual involvement and grassroots action are paramount to success and must be encouraged.
7. Success is measured by the civil rights we all achieve, not by words, access or money raised.
8. Those who seek our support are expected to commit to these principles.

## **FULL CIVIL RIGHTS GOALS**

**Being united by common principles and engaging in united action, we will achieve the following goals:**

1. **DIGNITY AND EQUALITY.** Every lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender person has inherent dignity and worth, and has the right to live free of discrimination and harassment.
2. **FAMILY.** Every LGBT person has the right to a family without legal barriers to immigration, civil marriage or raising children.
3. **ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY.** Every LGBT person has the right to economic opportunity free from discrimination in employment, public housing, accommodation, public facilities, credit, and federally funded programs and activities.
4. **EDUCATION.** Every LGBT child and youth has the right to an education that is affirming, inclusive and free from bullying.
5. **NATIONAL SECURITY.** Every LGBT person should have the opportunity to serve our country openly and equally in our military and foreign service.
6. **CRIME.** Every LGBT person should enjoy life protected against bias crimes.
7. **HEALTH CARE.** Every person should have access to affordable, high quality, and culturally competent health care without discrimination.

## **CALL TO ACTION**

1. We demand that government officials act now to achieve full civil rights without delay.
2. Our organizations and individuals need to develop a collaborative and revolutionary new organizing model that mobilizes millions of supporters through emerging web and phone technologies.
3. All LGBT individuals must accept personal responsibility to do everything within their power for equality and should get involved in the movement by volunteering, giving and being out.
4. We will hold elected officials and our organizations accountable for being transparent and achieving full civil rights by active participation when possible and active opposition when necessary.
5. Our allies need to be proactive in public support for full civil rights.
6. Every government measure that quantifies the US citizenry must permit LGBT individuals to self-identify and be counted in every way citizens are counted.
7. We demand that the media present LGBT lives in fair, accurate and objective ways that neither include nor give credence to unsubstantiated, discriminatory claims and opinions.