

An Appeal to the President and Vice President to Reconsider Their LGBT Strategy

Dear Mr. President and Mr. Vice President,

I write this letter as a supporter and advocate, not a critic or adversary, as someone who voted for you and who regularly calls on millions of Americans to pray for you. I also write this with the understanding that you have been elected to serve the American people as a whole and not just one particular faction of Americans.

The great challenge, however, is one that you must deal with on a daily basis: When you stand up for what you believe is right—be it securing our borders or nominating a solid pro-life justice to the Supreme Court—you will alienate a certain number of Americans who oppose your policies and choices. That is inevitable, although regrettable, but if there is any political leader on the planet who is more concerned with acting on convictions than with pleasing people, it is you.

And this brings me to the heart of this appeal.

While you have consistently positioned yourself as a friend of the LGBT community during your campaigning, having Peter Thiel speak at the Republican National Convention and holding up a “LGBTs for Trump” flag at one of your rallies, you have never positioned yourself as a champion of gay and transgender rights.

Conversely, you have most certainly positioned yourself as a champion of religious freedom, and you know that without the vote of conservative Christians (with whom I identify), you

could not have gained the presidency. In that respect, we are a unique and important part of your constituency and some of your strongest supporters.

In your first weeks in office, we have been tremendously heartened by some key choices you have made, and we were encouraged by the forcefulness of your speech at the National Prayer Breakfast. It is clear that our religious liberties are very important to you, and they should be, since they are at the very foundation of our nation.

We were also encouraged to hear that you were considering legislation that would have protected religious groups from the negative effects of one of President Obama's executive orders, namely, the order that put sexual orientation and gender identity on a par with skin color and ethnicity, as if gay were the new black or as if a man identifying as a woman was the same as him being Asian or Hispanic.

As it turns out, you signed a bill saying that you would uphold Mr. Obama's pro-LGBT activism, meaning, that while standing strongly for religious liberty you are unintentionally undercutting that very same liberty.

Mr. President, I truly believe that you desire to stand with LGBT Americans, and you do not want to see them hurt or attacked by others, and I second your sentiments wholeheartedly. At the same time, the legislation you signed will potentially punish conservative Christians and others for simply living out their faith. Not only so, but I believe you will soon learn that there is no appeasing LGBT activists and that as long as you demonstrate loyalty to your conservative Christian base, you will be considered their enemy.

To make matters worse—and here I turn my appeal to Mr. Pence—when the vice president recently appeared on ABC News with George Stephanopoulos, discussing this very issue, Mr. Pence responded to a pointed question about this executive

order by stating that “throughout the campaign, President Trump made it clear that discrimination would have no place in our administration.” He added, “I think the generosity of his spirit, recognizing that in the patriot’s heart there’s no room for prejudice is part of who this president is.”

Mr. Vice President, I know you are a committed Christian yourself, but may I ask if you are saying that it is prejudiced and discriminatory for someone to believe that it’s best for a child to have a mother and father (rather than two fathers or two mothers)? That it is prejudiced and discriminatory to believe that marriage is the union of a man and a woman (and therefore not the union of two men or two women)? That it is prejudiced and discriminatory to believe a 15-year-old boy who believes he is a girl should not be allowed to play on the girls’ sports teams or share their locker rooms and shower stalls?

Last year in England, a 42-year-old Christian evangelist was handing out gospel pamphlets on the street when a 19-year-old gay teen asked him what his God said about homosexuality. The preacher quoted Genesis to him, explaining that God made Adam and Eve to reproduce and have children.

Subsequently, the preacher was arrested and held in custody overnight and “accused of threatening or abusive behavior “aggravated by prejudice relating to sexual orientation”—despite not swearing or using any form of offensive language.

Vice President Pence, with all due honor, I ask you: Do you see how your choice of words reinforces the same mentality that led to the arrest of this Christian evangelist, specifically, that his actions were allegedly “aggravated by prejudice relating to sexual orientation”?

And President Trump, with the utmost respect, I ask you: Do you see how the executive order you signed is a step in the

wrong direction, a direction that ultimately leads to discrimination against Christians?

I'm quite aware, Mr. President, that the case in England is different than the federal legislation you signed, but having monitored the trajectory of LGBT activism for more than a decade, I can assure you that you will not win the widespread support of the LGBT community until you distance yourself from the evangelical Christians who helped elect you and who gave you wise counsel throughout your campaign. In other words, you will not be viewed as a real friend of the LGBT community until you side with gay activism at the cost of Christian liberties.

May I ask you to give these matters your prayerful consideration, inviting some of your most trusted spiritual advisers for input as well? And may I ask you, at the least, to go ahead and write the executive order we were expecting, namely the one enshrining our religious liberties?

If you put religious liberties first, it will be for the good of the nation as a whole.

If you side against these precious liberties, it will hurt the nation as a whole.

May God Himself give you wisdom.

You have my prayerful support. {eo}