

New Congressional Bill Declares Homosexual Love as a Basic Human Right

U.S. lawmakers in both houses of Congress introduced on Thursday a bill to protect and promote the rights of the international lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community.

The International Human Rights Defense Act, spearheaded by Sen. Edward Markey of Massachusetts and Rep. Alan Lowenthal of California, both Democrats, would appoint a special envoy within the U.S. Department of State to coordinate efforts to prevent discrimination and advance the rights of LGBT people worldwide.

“When President Obama addressed the nation and committed to defending the human rights of the LGBT community, we made that commitment to the world,” Markey said in a statement, referring to the State of the Union address earlier this month.

The same bill was introduced by Markey last year but never reached a vote. Its re-introduction this year comes as talks about the initiative are underway at the State Department, a spokeswoman for Markey told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

If passed, the bicameral legislation would direct the Department of State to make preventing and responding to discrimination and violence against the international LGBT community a foreign policy priority, as well as coordinate efforts to promote LGBT rights globally.

As LGBT rights, and especially same-sex couples’ right to marry, gained momentum across the United States throughout 2014, LGBT people remain subject to violence and

discrimination in many parts of the world.

In 2013, India re-criminalised homosexuality while Nigeria, Uganda and Gambia have all passed laws that make homosexuality a crime punishable with life imprisonment. In seven countries, homosexuality is punishable by death, the statement said.

In 2013, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a law prohibiting the spreading of “gay propaganda” among minors, causing outrage and protests among rights activists in Russia and in the West.

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