

Washington Litigation Group and Lambda Legal Sue Trump Administration Over Removal of Pride Flag at Stonewall National Monument

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NEW YORK, NY — (February 17, 2026) — Washington Litigation Group and Lambda Legal filed a suit today on behalf of a coalition of LGBTQ+ advocates and community members challenging the Trump Administration’s abrupt removal of the Pride flag on or about February 9, 2026, from the Stonewall National Monument in New York City.

The Stonewall National Monument is the first national monument in the United States dedicated to LGBTQ+ rights. It commemorates the 1969 Stonewall uprising and the fight for LGBTQ+ equality sparked by the uprising. In 2022, acknowledging the significance of the Pride flag to the monument and the LGBTQ+ community, the National Park Service (“NPS”), installed a permanent flagpole inside the federal monument and sent a representative to raise a Pride flag. But last week, without any warning or notice to the community, the Trump Administration removed the Pride flag, claiming its policies prohibited flying the Pride flag.

“The government’s decision is deeply disturbing and is just the latest example of the Trump Administration targeting the LGBTQ+ community. The Park Service’s policies permit flying flags that provide historical context at monuments,” said **Alexander Kristofcak, a lawyer with the Washington Litigation Group** who is lead counsel for plaintiffs. “That is precisely what the Pride flag does. It provides important context for a monument that honors a watershed moment in LGBTQ+ history. At best, the government misread its regulations. At worst, the government singled out the LGBTQ+ community. Either way, its actions are unlawful.”

“The Pride flag at the Stonewall National Monument honors the history of the fight for LGBTQ+ liberation. It is an integral part of the story this site was created to tell,” said **Douglas F. Curtis, Chief Legal Advocacy Officer at Lambda Legal**. “Its removal continues the Trump Administration’s disregard for what the law actually requires in their endless campaign to target our community for erasure and we will not let it stand.”

“Stonewall is the birthplace of the modern LGBTQ+ rights movement,” said **Charles Beal, the President of the Gilbert Baker Foundation**, one of the plaintiffs in the suit. The foundation’s mission is to protect and extend the legacy of Gilbert Baker, the creator of the Rainbow Pride flag. “The Pride flag is recognized globally as a symbol of hope and liberation for the LGBTQ+ community whose efforts and resistance define this monument. Removing it would, in fact, erase its history and the voices Stonewall honors,” explained Beal.

On February 12, local politicians and activists raised an unofficial Pride flag at the monument. Plaintiffs are asking the court to order the government to restore the official, NPS-sanctioned flag.

“The removal of the flag follows an alarming streak of attempts to erase LGBTQ+ history,” said **Andrew Berman, Executive Director of Village Preservation**, also a plaintiff in the suit. “The government’s mere tolerance of an unofficial flag does not repair the damage caused by its actions. An official Pride flag—authorized and maintained by NPS as part of the monument’s mission to interpret LGBTQ+ history—must be installed by the government,” Berman added.

“The Trump administration has been trying to erase our community from day one. We will not be erased,” said **Amanda Babine, Executive Director of Equality New York**, a plaintiff in the suit both on behalf of itself and its members. “The Pride flag stands for everyone who is a member of the LGBTQ+ community, and those who came before us, fighting for dignity and visibility. It stands sentry over the birthplace of our modern movement, where LGBTQ+ New Yorkers fought back against injustice. We will not be silent.”

The lawsuit, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, asks the court to declare the government’s removal of the flag unlawful under the Administrative Procedures Act and to order the government to reinstate the flag. Plaintiffs are the Gilbert Baker Foundation, Charles Beal, Village Preservation, and Equality New York.

With Alexander Kristofcak on the complaint are Mary L. Dohrmann, Sydney Foster, Kyle Freeny, James I. Pearce, and Nathaniel Zelinsky from WLG. With Douglas F. Curtis on the complaint are Karen L. Loewy, Camilla B. Taylor, Omar Gonzalez-Pagan, Ken Upton, Jennifer C. Pizer, and Nepheteri Smith from Lambda Legal.

The Washington Litigation Group defends individuals and institutions who have been unlawfully targeted for exercising their rights and fights to curb governmental overreach.

Lambda Legal is a national legal organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and everyone living with HIV through impact litigation, education and policy work. Please note: Alexander Kristofcak is admitted only in California and New York, and is practicing under the supervision of D.C. Bar members.

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