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Obama's agenda? 'Hate crimes' law White House site posts priority for special protection for 'gays'

Posted: January 20, 2009
2:56 pm Eastern

By Bob Unruh
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President Obama had not even finished his inaugural address today before his agenda was posted on the [WhiteHouse website](#), where he promised to "overturn" the Supreme Court's precedents on discrimination claims and to demand new laws requiring [employers](#) to provide special protections for homosexuals and others with "gender" issues.



President Barack Obama

Second on the list of priorities is Obama's demand for federal "hate crimes" laws, which opponents fear could be used to make basic Christian beliefs subject to federal penalties and prohibitions as already has happened in other nations.

The agenda was posted as Obama's technical team took over operation of the formal White House website from the Bush administration.

Civil rights was listed first under Obama's "entire agenda," and under that the first item was to "Combat Employment Discrimination."

(Story continues below)

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In wording that appeared to be copied from sections of his campaign website, the new administration stated, "President Obama and Vice President Biden will work to overturn the Supreme Court's recent ruling that curtails racial minorities' and women's ability to challenge pay discrimination. They will also pass the Fair Pay Act, to ensure that women receive equal pay for equal work, and the [Employment](#) Non-Discrimination Act, to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity or expression."

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In 2007, the Supreme Court concluded that a federal civil rights law that sets a 180-day deadline for [employees](#) to allege they were paid less because of their sex, race, national origin or religion is valid.

At the time, Justice Samuel Alito concluded employers would have trouble defending against claims that could come from employment actions "that are long past."

A federal Employment Nondiscrimination Act, which would demand employers provide supportive treatment for cross-dressers, transgenders and people who engage in other sexual lifestyles, has failed so far in Congress.

Observers, however, say Bush's opposition has led to the failure of "hate crimes" legislation that could be used to ban Christians' citation of biblical condemnation of homosexuality. Bush had stated that such provisions probably were unconstitutional and certainly unnecessary.

But second on Obama's agenda was the aim of expanding "hate crimes" statutes.

"President Obama and Vice President Biden will strengthen federal hate crimes legislation, expand hate crimes protection by passing the Matthew Shepard Act, and reinvigorate enforcement at the Department of Justice's Criminal Section," the agenda says.

Other high priorities are to end deceptive voting practices and end racial profiling, but Obama's agenda then returns to the issue of special support for homosexuality.

It cites a statement Obama made in 2007:

"While we have come a long way since the Stonewall riots in 1969, we still have a lot of work to do. Too often, the issue of LGBT rights is exploited by those seeking to divide us. But at its core, this issue is about who we are as Americans. It's about whether this nation is going to live up to its founding promise of equality by treating all its citizens with dignity and respect."

The White House site then elaborates on Obama's plans to give the "gay" community many of its longstanding demands.

Obama, the website says, already has "cosponsored legislation that would expand federal jurisdiction to include violent hate crimes perpetrated because of race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity, or physical [disability](#). As a state senator, President Obama passed tough legislation that made hate crimes and conspiracy to commit them against the law."

Further, he "supports the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, and believes that our anti-discrimination employment laws should be expanded to include sexual orientation and gender identity."

Moving even further, the website promotes Obama's desire for "full civil unions that give same-sex couples legal rights and privileges equal to those of married couples."

In addition, the agenda declares a "need to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act and enact legislation that would ensure that the 1,100-plus federal legal rights and benefits currently provided on the basis of marital status are extended to same-sex couples in civil unions and other legally-recognized unions."

The website also promises a repeal of the "don't ask-don't tell" policy that bans open homosexuals in the U.S. military and an expansion of adoption "rights" for homosexuals.

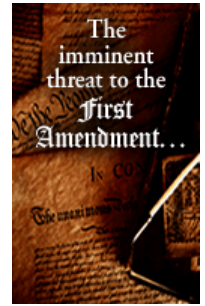
As WND reported, Congress already is making preparations to meet some of Obama's demands.

Democratic Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee of Texas has proposed a federal "hate crimes" bill that is feared by Christians as a potential bludgeon against basic biblical teachings.

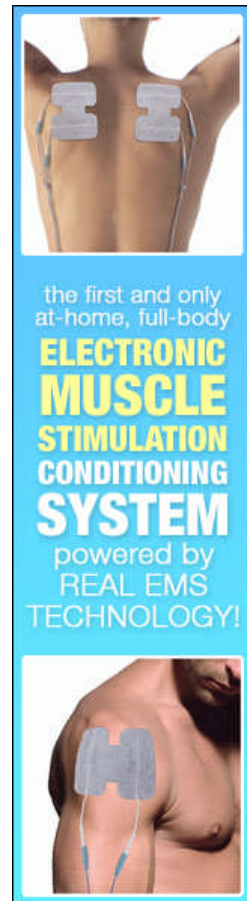
The proposal had been stymied during the Bush administration by the president's threat of a veto. In a statement at the time, the Bush administration said the plan was "unnecessary and constitutionally questionable."

"The administration favors strong criminal penalties for violent crime, including crimes based on personal characteristics, such as race, color, religion, or national origin. However ... if [then plan at that time] were presented to the president, his senior advisers would recommend that he veto the bill," the White House said at the time.

But the Jackson-Lee plan, [the "David Ray Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009,"](#) now already has



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been referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary for the 2009 Congress.

On her website, Jackson-Lee states "hate crimes" are so much worse than ordinary crimes because of their impact.

"A random act of violence resulting in injury or even death is a tragic event that devastates the lives of the victim and their family, but the intentional selection and beating or murder of an individual because of who they are terrorizes an entire community and sometimes the nation," she warns.

Many states already have "hate crimes" legislation. A couple running a photography studio in New Mexico faced thousands of dollars in fines for their decision not to provide photography services to a pair of lesbians because of the Christian beliefs of the studio owners. In [Pennsylvania](#), a 75-year-old grandmother was threatened with prison for advocating a biblical perspective of homosexuality.

Internationally, Christians in several nations have been penalized for stating a biblically based condemnation of homosexuality.

Former White House insider Chuck Colson, in his [Breakpoint commentary](#), has called such proposals "Thought Crimes" plans.

"It's about outlawing peaceful speech – speech that asserts that homosexual behavior is morally wrong," he said.

Critics have said "hate crimes" laws actually criminalize thought because they demand enhanced penalties because of the "perception" of the victim by the perpetrator. A mugger, for example, who attacks a victim while screaming an epithet denoting a race or sexual preference could get a much more significant penalty than a mugger who attacks a victim but doesn't say anything.

Jackson-Lee also has proposed [a companion piece of legislation](#) that would "provide support services for victims of hate crimes."

The measure been referred to the Committee on the Judiciary as well as the Committees on Ways and Means, Energy and [Commerce](#), Education and Labor, Oversight and others.

It allows victims of "hate crimes" to take federally authorized family and medical leave and collect unemployment [insurance](#), creates grants for housing for such victims and provides [counseling](#) and "related assistance."

Well down in the long list of provisions in the second plan is an attempt to "establish and operate a national clearinghouse and resource center for information and [statistics](#) relating to ... hate crimes."

The "clearinghouse" would be run by "a private nonprofit organization," according to the legislation.

Matt Barber, chief of cultural affairs at [Liberty Counsel](#), has spoken out repeatedly in opposition to the idea.

"The Fourteenth Amendment to the [United States](#) Constitution guarantees equal protection under the law," he said. "Hate crimes legislation is ... [a] violation of the Fourteenth Amendment in that it elevates one class of citizen based upon their chosen sexual behaviors above other people."

[Coral Ridge Ministries](#), launched by the late D. James Kennedy, has published a book on the issue by John Aman, which says such laws put into doubt "the future of religious liberty and freedom of speech for Christians."

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