



## Rainbow Heritage Network

May 9, 2016

The Honorable Barack Obama  
The White House  
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President:

The National Park Service (NPS) is committed to developing a more inclusive historic preservation program, stating in its mission: “We Americans have always been characterized by our diversity.... Americans now and in the future deserve to see themselves – however they describe themselves – in the story of America.”

We applaud NPS for documenting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) history as part of the LGBTQ Heritage Initiative. This groundbreaking and highly important project will result in LGBTQ history being incorporated in programs managed by NPS.

Yet, even while we seek to preserve the history of LGBTQ experience through properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places, nothing compares to the full inclusion of LGBTQ history and culture within our national park system itself.

**That is why we write today to urge you to designate the area around Stonewall as a national monument.**

The Stonewall Inn and Christopher Park in New York’s West Village served as the sites of the 1969 uprising that signified a major turning point in LGBTQ history. This story represents a history that affects all Americans and exemplifies the uniquely American values enshrined in our Bill of Rights. LGBTQ history is American history.

By establishing 16 national monuments and signing legislation creating many more, you have demonstrated that it is a priority for you to protect and preserve America’s special places. We hope you will act again to protect the places important to telling the LGBTQ story.

Sincerely,

Katie Batza (Executive Co-Coordinator)  
Jeffrey “Free” Harris  
Mark Meinke (Treasurer)  
Eli Pousson  
Shayne Watson

Jen Jack Giesecking  
Paula Martinac (Secretary)  
Milo Miller  
Deborah Richards

*The Rainbow Heritage Network is a national organization for the recognition and preservation of sites, history, and heritage associated with sexual and gender minorities in the United States. This includes, but is not limited to, those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer.*