



The Public Advocate for the City of New York

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The Honorable Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President,

National Monuments - which are one type of Nation Park - tell the story of American History. A Stonewall National Monument would be the first site within the National Park system that recognizes the contributions of LGBT Americans, and would tell the story of the LGBT civil rights struggle along with places like Seneca Falls and Selma, both of which are national park sites.

As the Public Advocate for the City of New York, I am writing to express my support for a proposal to create a Stonewall National Monument as the first national park site designed to interpret, protect, and preserve the history and culture of LGBT people in Christopher Park.

The Stonewall Inn and Christopher Park in New York's West Village served as the site of the 1969 rebellion that signified a major turning point in LGBT history. A few brave individuals stood up and demanded an end to police harassment, arrests and raids on LGBT establishments. Their actions raised awareness of the unequal treatment of the LGBT community, and have come to symbolize the start of the modern LGBT civil rights movement worldwide.

America's national parks tell some of the most important aspects of our shared culture and history. These special places provide the opportunity to celebrate and learn about our shared past, preserve our historic spaces, and bring renewed commitment to the communities that helped to shape our country. We applaud the National Park Service (NPS) for undertaking the LGBT Heritage Initiative, an important review of ways to incorporate LGBT stories into the narratives presented by the agency. A Stonewall National Monument would be the first unit in the National Parks system dedicated to this community.

Manhattan Community Board 2, which represents the local area, has expressed its unanimous support for partnering with the NPS to recognize these significant events. We request that you designate a Stonewall National Monument to preserve and protect this important history.

Given the recent victory by the Supreme Court on marriage equality, I could not think of a better time to support an effort to place the story of LGBT history in the narrative of our national history.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Letitia James
Public Advocate for the City of New York