# CIVIL RIGHTS

# How do sexual orientation laws and policies discriminate against ex-gays?

Ex-gays and their supporters live in an increasingly hostile society where they are labelled as perpetrators of hate against gavs simply because they advocate for or live out a different view of homosexuality. Since the early 1990's, gay activists have created a public environment where everyone who does not accept that homosexuality is as normal, natural and healthy as heterosexuality is labelled a "bigot" whose attitudes equate to racism. Alternatives to homosexuality are interpreted as "harassment" against gays, even though the individuals seeking to leave behind their unwanted same-sex attractions are merely exercising a freedom to reaffirm the gender of their birth.

Individuals have experienced homosexuality differently in their lives. If a gay person's sense of well-being is dependent on all other people with same-sex attractions having had the same experience that they did, then that person is in a dangerous place. In fact, this is what has caused persecution of ex-gays.

In this climate of intolerance against ex-gays due to their very existence, support for the exgay community is interpreted as hate against homosexuals. Courageous men and women who have left their homosexual identity must not be denied their constitutional rights. To give sexual orientation protection to one group while excluding another is outright discrimination.

#### But aren't some people born "gay"?

According to the American Psychiatric Association, no replicated scientific studies support the theory that people can be born "gay" or that homosexuality is innate. No medical test for a "gay gene" exists. There is no scientific or DNA test that shows a person is homosexual. Sexual orientation is a matter of self-affirmation and public declaration.

# Why must ex-gays be included in sexual orientation topics?

Ex-gays must be included in the formation of public policy because they have much to contribute to the understanding and application of sexual orientation. Without testimony from all sectors of society, public policy on this issue is seriously flawed.



Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays & Gays (PFOX)
A non-profit organization supporting
equal rights for the ex-gay community

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# TOLERANCE for THE EX-GAY COMMUNITY

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### **EX-GAYS**

## **EQUAL RIGHTS**

## TOLERANCE

#### **WHAT IS PFOX?**

Parents and Friends of Ex-Gays & Gays (PFOX) is a non-profit organization providing outreach, education, and public awareness in support of families of homosexuals. PFOX also promotes an inclusive environment for the ex-gay community, and works to eliminate negative perceptions and discrimination against former homosexuals.

#### **WHO ARE EX-GAYS?**

Each year, thousands of people with unwanted same-sex attractions make the personal decision to leave a gay identity through gender affirming programs, including counseling, support groups, faith based ministries, and other non-judgmental environments. Their decision is one only they can make. But there are others in society who refuse to respect individual self-determination. Consequently, formerly gay men and women are often victims of hate simply because they dare to exist.

Ex-gays and their supporters should not have to be closeted for fear of other's disapproval. Former homosexuals do not think something is wrong with them because they decided to fulfill their heterosexual potential. Nor do they believe others should condemn them for the personal decision they have made for their lives. Full diversity must include the ex-gay community.

#### **WHAT DO EX-GAYS WANT?**

The ex-gay movement seeks to ensure the inclusion of former homosexuals in all realms of society. Ex-gays believe that their right to self-determination should not be grounds for intolerance in any form.

Because of the abuse heaped upon them by society, former homosexuals experience discrimination at every level. This irrational phobia of those who have overcome unwanted same-sex attractions perpetuates misunderstanding and harm against the ex-gay community. It also demonstrates a disregard for diversity and a refusal to respect a basic human right to dignity and self-determination.

While transgenders and cross-dressers are affirmed for changing their gender identity, former homosexuals are ridiculed for making the decision to change their feelings and sexual orientation. While gays can come out of the "closet," ex-gays are forced to stay in theirs because they are bullied into silence by gay activists. While gays gain sympathy as victims, ex-gays are criticized and face life-long intolerance for simply existing as living proof that homosexuality is not innate.

Those with unwanted same-sex attractions deserve the right to self-determination and happiness based on their own needs, and not the demands of others.

# <u>Do gay activists oppose efforts to protect</u> the equal rights of **former homosexuals**?

They shouldn't, but they do. Although gay groups advocate for the rights of homosexuals, lesbians, bisexuals, the intersexed, and transgenders, they oppose ex-gay equality. Therefore, if it were not for organizations like PFOX, former gay men and women would have no support in an increasingly hostile environment. The addition of ex-gays ensures tolerance for all segments of our society. PFOX is not an anti-gay organization - rather, we are a proex-gay organization. All people should be treated with dignity. We respect the opinions of others, even if they disagree with us. Indeed, we do not ask for their approval - only their tolerance.

## Do I have to dislike ex-gays if I have gay friends or family?

No! You can have friends who are gay and other friends who are ex-gay. Befriending the ex-gay community does not mean that you are being disloyal to the gay people you know and love. Some in society reject exgays and homosexuals who do not embrace same-sex behavior. This rejection is a form of heterophobia that can be overcome with education and outreach. Individuals who pursue alternatives to homosexuality should not be objects of discrimination or ridicule.