

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 11, 2026

The Honorable Doug Burgum
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

The Honorable Jessica Bowron
Acting Director
National Park Service
1849 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Secretary Burgum and Acting Director Bowron:

We write to you to strongly condemn the decision to remove the Pride flag from the grounds of the Stonewall National Monument. Removing the Pride flag is an insult to the bravery and sacrifice of those who fought for equality for the LGBTQ+ community, and is antithetical to American values of liberty and justice for all. The flag must be replaced immediately.

As you know, the Stonewall Inn is the birthplace of the modern LGBTQ+ civil rights movement, and was designated as a national monument by the National Park Service (NPS) on June 24, 2016 - the first unit of the National Park System dedicated to LGBTQ+ equality. The monument stands as a testament to the struggle for civil rights in this country, and the Pride flag embodies the ideals of that movement: unity, inclusion, love, and the ongoing fight for justice and equality.

Last month, NPS issued guidance¹ which requires that only the U.S. flag or other congressionally or departmentally authorized flags are permitted to be flown on NPS-managed flagpoles. As a result, the NPS has decided to remove the Pride flag which has historically been flown at the Stonewall National Monument. This latest decision, however, follows an alarming trend of anti-LGBTQ+ decisions by the NPS. Last year, the NPS also removed references² to transgender and queer Americans from the Stonewall National Monument website and Pride display, and has otherwise sought to rewrite the history of the Stonewall Inn.

¹ United States Department of the Interior. (2023). Guidance on the Display and Flying of Non-Agency Flags and Pennants within the National Park System. In *Memorandum*.

https://home.nps.gov/subjects/policy/upload/Flag_Guidance_Memorandum_1-21-2026.pdf

² Kim, J. (2025, February 14). Park Service erases “transgender” on Stonewall website, uses the term “LGB” movement. *NPR*. <https://www.npr.org/2025/02/14/g-s1-48923/stonewall-monument-transgender-park-service>

These decisions are deeply offensive and send a troubling message to the LGBTQ+ community. We unequivocally reject this administration's attempts to erase or otherwise rewrite LGBTQ+ history, which fundamentally undermines the trust and respect of communities that are central to our American story. At a time when hate crimes against LGBTQ+ individuals remain alarmingly high³, we all must work to support and uplift the LGBTQ+ community - not sow further division and strife. As New Yorkers, and as Americans, we have a duty to honor the legacy of those who struggled and endured so that future generations of LGBTQ+ individuals might finally live in a country free of discrimination.

We demand the NPS immediately reverse this decision, and restore the Pride flag to its rightful place at the Stonewall National Monument. We also request an immediate briefing with the National Park Service to understand the rationale behind these decisions, and to ensure that erasure of LGBTQ+ history comes to an end.

We look forward to your prompt reply.

Sincerely,



Dan Goldman
Member of Congress



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

³FBI's annual crime report: Hate crimes against LGBTQ+ community. . . (2025, August 6). HRC. <https://www.hrc.org/press-releases/fbis-annual-crime-report-hate-crimes-against-lgbtq-community-remain-among-top-3-most-reported-categories>