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## Accountable For Equality Calls Out Trump Administration and HHS Civil Rights Director for Scrapping LGBT Protections Amid COVID-19 Pandemic

*Trump Administration Ending Obama-Era Protections for LGBT Patients During Health Crisis*

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Accountable for Equality today denounced the Trump Administration and Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) civil rights chief Roger Severino for [working to end](#) critical anti-discrimination protections for LGBT patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Trump Administration is rewriting regulations on to exclude LGBT people on Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act that, which bars health care discrimination based on sex and gender identity. Health experts have warned that rolling back these Obama-era protections could bring further harm to already-vulnerable patients.

Roger Severino, who formerly worked for the the anti-LGBT Heritage Foundation, has [a long history](#) of seeking to marginalize the LGBT community, notably criticizing bans on “reparative therapy” that is repeatedly discredited by science and publicly sharing his discriminatory views on same-sex marriage and protections for transgender people.

“The way Roger Severino and the Trump Administration are blatantly taking advantage of this crisis to push forward their hateful agenda and strip away common sense LGBT protections is despicable and nonsensical,” **said Accountable for Equality Spokesman Chris Fleming**. “We are facing an unprecedented health crisis, and rather than lead our country through this with dignity, Severino is focused on stripping away the rights of LGBT Americans and putting up additional hurdles to health care. Severino, who has made his anti-LGBT views crystal clear, has no place leading the civil rights office of HHS. In the midst of a global pandemic, HHS should be focused on more urgent issues than marginalizing a segment of Americans. ”

“The COVID-19 pandemic has shone a bright and unflattering light on the disparities that already exist in our healthcare system, including the barriers to care faced by the LGBT community. This move by Severino will make seeking health care even less safe for vulnerable members of the LGBT community,” **said Mara Keisling, Executive Director, National Center for Transgender Equality**. “Implementing this HHS rule change at any time, but especially in the middle of a global health crisis, is an act of particular cruelty by Trump and Roger Severino.”

Amidst the COVID-19 crisis, Accountable for Equality is focusing its efforts to highlight those that are capitalizing on the pandemic to advance their own biased priorities that marginalize populations. It's #NoTimeForNonsense.

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