

SCOTUS ruling protecting gay and transgender rights reaffirms sea change in American attitudes, rebuffs Trump Administration policies

When Donald J. Trump was elected president, gay and lesbian leaders warned that their far-reaching victories under Barack Obama — including the Supreme Court’s decision legalizing same-sex marriage in 2015 — were in peril, endangered by the imminent arrival of scores of conservative judges and full Republican control of the federal government.

So it would be an understatement to say that gay rights leaders and supporters were surprised by [the court’s ruling on \[June 15\]](#) that the 1964 Civil Rights Act protects gay and transgender Americans from workplace discrimination. They were stunned. Stunned that two conservative justices had sided with them. Stunned that this happened on top of a Republican appointee writing the marriage ruling, too.

In many ways, the decision is the strongest evidence yet of how fundamentally, rapidly and, to some degree, unpredictably American views about gay and transgender people have changed across the ideological spectrum in less than 20 years. It is all the more striking after the Trump administration moved last week to [erase protections for transgender patients](#) against discrimination by doctors, hospitals and health insurance companies.

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And it is potentially the movement’s most consequential victory yet, with implications that could touch the lives and livelihoods of more Americans than any gay rights decision by the court so far.

“As of today, nowhere in the United States is it legal to fire someone for being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender. That’s a big deal,” said [lawyer] Roy T. Englert.

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