

POLITICS MIKE PENCE

Here's What Mike Pence Said on LGBT Issues Over the Years

Will Drabold @WillDrabold | July 15, 2016

In a speech opposing gay marriage, Pence said "societal collapse was always brought about following an advent of the deterioration of marriage and family."

Indiana Gov. Mike Pence, [Donald Trump's running mate](#), attracted national attention last year when he signed a religious freedom law that members of the LGBT community said could worsen discrimination against them.

After criticism from the business community, Pence [signed an amendment](#) to the law intended to protect gays and lesbians.

But it was not his first brush with criticism from the LGBT community. A self-described "[Christian, a conservative and a Republican, in that order](#)," the former member of Congress was a prominent conservative figure in battles over marriage equality and equal rights in the last decade.

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Here are some of the statements and positions Pence had has related to LGBT issues:

He said gay couples signaled 'societal collapse'

In 2006, as head of the Republican Study Committee, a group of the 100 most-conservative House members, Pence rose in support of a constitutional amendment that would have defined marriage as between a man and a woman. Citing a Harvard researcher, Pence [said in his speech](#), “societal collapse was always brought about following an advent of the deterioration of marriage and family.” Pence also called being gay a choice and said keeping gays from marrying was not discrimination, but an enforcement of “God’s idea.”

He opposed a law that would prohibit discrimination against LGBT people in the workplace

The Employment Non-Discrimination Act would have banned discrimination against people based on sexual orientation. Pence [voted against that law](#) in 2007 and later said the law “[wages war on freedom and religion in the workplace](#).”

More than 20 years after the bill was first introduced, the Senate [approved the proposal in 2013](#), but the bill failed in the House.

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He opposed the repeal of Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell

Pence favored the longtime military policy of not letting soldiers openly identify as gay. In 2010, Pence told CNN he did not want to see the military become “[a backdrop for social experimentation](#).” The [policy ended in 2011](#).

He rejected the Obama administration directive on transgender bathrooms

In May, the federal government directed school districts to allow students to use the bathroom of the gender they identify with. The directive came as [criticism crescendoed around a North Carolina law](#) that would have restricted the use of bathrooms.

Along with many other conservatives, Pence opposed Obama’s directive and said it was a state issue. “The federal government has not business getting involved in issues of this nature,” [Pence said](#).

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