



Nancy Pelosi
Democratic Leader

May 5, 2017

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest
Washington, D.C. 20006

Dear Mr. President:

The coordinated campaign of disappearances, torture and murder of gay men in Chechnya requires swift action from the United States.

Human rights watchdog groups and experts with the U.N. Human Rights Council are reporting the Chechen government's barbaric treatment of men perceived as gay: including arrest, secret detention, beatings, torture with electric shocks, and the threat of having their sexual orientation exposed to their family and community, putting them at risk of 'honor killings.'

Unsurprisingly, these searing reports have been met with indifference and denial from the Russian Government. In fact, the systematic brutality against LGBT people in Chechnya is just the latest horror in the accelerating persecution of LGBT men and women throughout Vladimir Putin's Russia.

The United States must act to provide refuge and resettlement for LGBT Russians, who are in imminent danger of violent persecution by their government at the regional and national level. Unless we act quickly to recognize LGBT individuals in the Russian Federation as a priority for resettlement, these men and women will suffer a grim fate. Therefore, I write to request that your Administration set aside the refugee ban and reduction in the refugee ceiling for all affected groups, and declare a priority refugee designation for LGBT Russians.

While the United States demands that Russia stop these vile abuses, we must also provide a lifeline for refuge and resettlement for the innocent LGBT Russians being brutalized and murdered because of who they are and who they love.

Thank you for your review of this urgent matter.

best regards,

NANCY PELOSI
Democratic Leader