

# Stonewall still means fight back!

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May Day 2019: International Workers' Day celebrated in Cuba. Photo: Bill Hackwell

On May 24, the [Washington Blade](#) reported on the Trump administration's latest assault on transgender rights. On the day before a long holiday weekend, the Department of Health and Human Services proposed a rule that would strip the Affordable Care Act of its protections for transgender folk and women.

Until now, the ACA, also known as Obamacare, has offered protection to trans people and women against acts of discrimination by health care practitioners. The regulation change announced by HHS will eliminate these protections.

In a pathetic effort to minimize the outrageous character of the new rule, the HHS noted that it would continue to enforce nondiscrimination on the basis of "race, color, national origin, disability, age and sex." Although the statement doesn't explain how, HHS asserted that the rule change will save taxpayers \$3.6 billion over the next five years.

A recent "conscience" rule change by the Trump administration already protects health care bigots who refuse to deal with sex reassignment cases or abortions. And, in a further assault on trans rights, the Department of Housing and Urban Development [proposed eliminating a rule](#) that previously protected homeless transgender folk from discrimination at homeless shelters funded by the government.

The Washington Blade article notes that a Supreme Court case due to be ruled on soon "could either affirm decades of case law defending transgender people, or throw them out with a single ruling."

Of course, trans people are not just under attack by the Trump administration. Scarcely a week passes without the news of another trans person, most often a trans woman of color, murdered. On the same day as the HHS announcement, a gathering of 200 trans activists and supporters in New York's Washington Square Park demanded an end to the murders of Black transgender women. Their protest focused

on the slayings of three Black trans women that occurred in the space of one week less than a month ago. Claire Legato died from gunshot wounds in Cleveland, Muhlaysia Booken was killed in Dallas and Michelle Washington was murdered in Philadelphia.

A [Reuters report](#) on the New York protest noted that “at least 26 transgender women were reported killed in 2018 and 29 in 2017” in the U.S. But the truth is that many murderous attacks on trans women, especially on Black trans women, never get reported or are mischaracterized by the police.

### **Different history in Cuba**

What an outrageous contrast with the conditions of life for trans folk in Cuba. Not that the enemies of Cuba would be at all concerned with the well-being of differently gendered people, but they have never been able to accuse Cuba of harboring violence against Cuban trans people because it doesn't exist in that socialist country.

What the U.S. capitalist media don't like to publicize is exactly that dramatic difference in social status plus the fact that trans people in Cuba have free access to quality health care, as do all Cubans, and that includes free access to sex reassignment surgery on demand. For women, free reproductive care, including the right to a safe abortion on demand, is available to all Cuban women.

Socialist Cuba's achievements in the areas of health care, education and equal rights for all have been won despite the continuing open hostility of the imperialist monster to the north. The relentless efforts of the U.S. to recolonize Cuba, most notably using the ever tightening economic blockade, have made social progress more difficult, but all the more remarkable.

Cuba needs our solidarity. Demand that the U.S. end its illegal blockade of the island nation! And express your solidarity with the Washington Square protesters who

chanted, “Black trans lives matter!”

