

# DC Black Church Initiative

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**PRESS RELEASE**  
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## National Black Church Initiative Decries Violence Against Gays

### *Black Church speaks out against violence against gays*

**Washington, DC** – Violence against any person is abhorrent to the Black Church, but the National Black Church Initiative feels that it is even more abhorrent when that violence is caused by hatred and misunderstanding. Such is reportedly the case with the murder of Seaman August Provost of Houston, Texas on Tuesday, July 2. The 29-year-old soldier was found dead at the Southern California military base where he served, and activists suspect the murder may have been related to his homosexuality. The Black Church offers its prayers to the families of the victim and to the unidentified man who was arrested as a “person of interest” in the case. Acts like this are unjustifiable, and against the teachings of God.

The church does not condone, and never will condone, violence against anyone based upon their race, creed or sexuality and we will not tolerate it in America’s military. NBCI stands united with our gay brothers and sisters in condemning this abhorrent act and hopes to work alongside them in order to stem the ever increasing flow of violence towards the gay community. We, and God, command that all people be treated equal, whether they are gay, straight, black, white, male or female. NBCI will be having its 34,000 congregations across the country pray for all those affected by hate crimes, and will continuously preach that violence towards gays, and anyone else, is against the word of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Anthony Evans, President of the National Black Church Initiative, said, “I am horrified to learn of the death of Seaman Provost. NBCI has consistently spoken out against violence towards the gay community. We will not tolerate any violence against our gay brothers and sisters based upon their sexuality, or for any other reason. We wholeheartedly have an enduring and abiding love for our gay brothers and sisters and will not stand for society characterizing

them as anything less than a child of God. This is not our first time in speaking out against violence towards the gay community. We have been doing it for years and we will not stop. I have asked our Southwest Faith Command leader down in Dallas to monitor this particular case and to get local member churches to write letters to the Houston Police Department, asking for a vigorous and intense investigation as to why this young man is dead. I have also ordered our Faith Command to participate in any activity that will highlight this continually growing problem of attacking individuals because of their sexuality. I will personally speak with, in the near future, the Houston Chief of Police as to inquire on the progress of this investigation. We stand with our gay brothers and sisters across this country in ending violence against them.”

#### About NBCI

The National Black Church Initiative (NBCI), a coalition of 16,000 African-American and Latino member churches works to eradicate racial disparities in healthcare. In addition to our member churches, we have 18,000 sister churches. NBCI is a faith-based health organization dedicated to providing critical wellness information and preventive health screening to all of its members. The African-American community ranks first in eleven different health risk categories. NBCI’s purpose is to partner with national health officials to provide health education, reduce racial health disparities, and increase access to quality healthcare.