

**More Than 1,000 Show up for Haiti Anti-Gay Protest**  
**By Associated Press**  
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More than 1,000 people in Haiti participated Friday in a rare street demonstration to protest homosexuality and a proposal to legalize gay marriage in the Caribbean nation.

The protest brought together a mix of religious groups, from Protestant to Muslim, who carried anti-gay placards and chanted songs, including one in which they threatened to burn down parliament if its members make same-sex marriage legal.

A Haitian gay rights group has said it plans to submit a proposal allowing homosexuals to wed.

"I believe in God, and God condemns homosexuality," said protester Eddy Jean-Pierre, a self-described Protestant. "Haiti is not going to accept this, and God will punish us further if we allow this law to pass."

The demonstration organized by several religious groups, including one calling itself the Haitian Coalition of Religious and Moral Organizations, came two days after watchdog groups held a news conference to condemn what they say is an increase in threats against homosexuals in the country. They also took issue with plans for the Friday protest.

The coalition of religious groups said three weeks ago that it opposed recent laws in other countries supporting gay marriage.

Haiti's gay and lesbian community is small and has long kept a low-profile because of a strong social stigma that sparks fears of physical violence and loss of employment.

Gay rights groups in Haiti say that members of the country's lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community often don't report rights violations to authorities out of fear of reprisal. Those people also have suffered overt discrimination from law enforcement and judicial authorities, particularly in Port-au-Prince, the U.S. State Department said in a 2012 report on human rights in Haiti.