

Married gay couple face Christmas heartache as UK Home Office vows to 'tear their family apart'

Wednesday 28 November, 2018

BRIAN PAGE, a 41-year-old man from North Carolina and his 36-year-old English husband Ben face having their family torn apart just in time for Christmas. The couple of nearly 7 years live in Milton Keynes and were married in New York in June 2014 before moving to England to provide support to Ben's terminally ill mother.

Ben's mother lost her battle with cancer in 2016 and shortly after, Ben's father was subsequently diagnosed with lung cancer in 2017. The couple provide emotional and practical support to Ben's father while he undergoes a range of treatments including radiotherapy and a course of chemotherapy which is planned for the new year.

Brian and Ben envisaged a very different life together and after Ben's mother passed away and his father was diagnosed with lung cancer, they hoped to make the UK their home before adopting a child and completing their family. The Home Office claim that having entered the UK as a visitor, Brian cannot expect to remain and settle in the UK despite his being married to a British citizen and their having laid down shared roots in Milton Keynes. The government have said the couple could move to a third country such as Canada despite neither having any connections there or any rights of abode. Brian returning to the US to apply for the necessary paperwork would involve significant further costs and could take up to two years.

The couple have a final appeal at the Upper Tribunal in December. Just days after Brian's 42nd birthday, the couple will face the Home Office again and due to the £16,000 already spent in legal fees, the couple face the prospect of representing themselves again.

[Rob McDowall](#) a human rights advocate and member of the Equality Council shared his scathing criticism of the Home Office in this case.

"Yet again we see another case where the inept Home Office are acting with callous disregard, and, in a manner, which is clearly counter to the interests of the UK. Here we see a strong, supportive and stable family who desire nothing more than laying permanent foundations in the UK and giving a loving home to an adopted child."

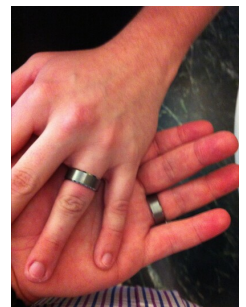
"The couple provide essential support to Ben's father and both have been put under such unimaginable stress that they are being treated for depression and anxiety made all the worse with the prospect of their imminent separation."

"Their MP, Conservative Mark Lancaster has met the couple once for 10 minutes. Call me old-fashioned but isn't this the type of case you'd expect an MP to be jumping up and down on the benches at the Commons to highlight? The Home Office has long been unfit for purpose and the recent Windrush scandal is but the tip of the Iceberg. We can't keep putting our heads down and walking on by, to deport Brian and split up this couple would be an absolute travesty and would cause untold damage to this family and both parties within it. I call on the Home Secretary to intervene and restore some common sense!"

Press

Media calls to 0843 886 8123 or email brianpage@equalitycouncil.eu.org (auto forwarded to Brian)

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