

Date:

Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee
C/O Stamp Development U.S. Postal Service
475 L'Enfant Plaza SW, Room 3300
Washington DC 20260-3501

Re: Honor Bayard Rustin with a U.S. Postal Stamp

Dear Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee,

I respectfully request that a commemorative stamp be issued soon honoring Bayard Rustin for his movement in civil rights and equality. Bayard Rustin was an unyielding activist for civil rights, dignity and equality for all. As an advisor to the Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., he promoted nonviolent resistance, participated in one of the first Freedom Rides, organized the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, and fought tirelessly for marginalized communities at home and abroad. As an openly gay African American, he rarely served as a public spokesman but, was an influential advisor to civil-rights leaders. In the 1970's Rustin became a public advocate on behalf of gay and lesbian causes.

Despite the fact that Rustin played such an important role in the civil rights movement, Rustin "faded from the shortlist of well-known civil rights lions," in large part because of the public discomfort with his sexual orientation. Even though NAACP chairman Roy Wilkins worked to ensure Rustin did not receive any public credit for his role on the march on Washington, due to his homosexuality, on October 6, 1963 Rustin and Philip Randolph appeared on the cover of Life Magazine as "the leaders" of the march.

On November 20, 2013, President Barack Obama posthumously awarded Rustin the Presidential Medal of Freedom. As you know, this is America's highest civilian honor, awarded to individuals who make an especially meritorious contribution to the security or national interest of the United States, world peace, cultural or other significant public or private endeavors.

Bayard Rustin truly stood at the intersection of several of the fights for equal rights and should be recognized for his exceptional dedication to equality.

I ask that you please give serious consideration to this worthy cause.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
