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Rossia Segodnya Head Given Presidential Award

By The Moscow Times

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State television host Dmitry Kiselyov, known for his strong opposition to gay rights in Russia, has been awarded the Order of Service to the Fatherland by President Vladimir Putin.

A presidential decree published on the government's legal documents website said the honor was bestowed on Kiselyov for his contribution to Russia's "social and economic development," and for his "achievements in the humanitarian sphere, the strengthening of the rule of law, [and] protecting the rights and interests of citizens."

It appears this humanitarianism does not extend to the sphere of gay rights, however.

In the past, Kiselyov has called for a ban on LGBT people becoming blood donors and for burning the hearts of gay people who die in accidents, as they are "unsuitable for extending the life of another." He has also argued that a law banning gay "propaganda" to Russian minors is an insufficient measure.

Last fall, Kiselyov's hardline views saw him awarded a very different prize: the Silver Galosh award for the "biggest intolerance of the year." The so-called anti-award event is organized by radio station Serebryany Dozhd to single out public figures for their dubious achievements.

Kiselyov, who was appointed in December to head a newly created news agency aimed at promoting Russia's image abroad, is the only recipient of the Order of Service to the Fatherland listed in the 19-page presidential decree that Putin signed on Feb. 13.

Other recipients of high state honors named in the decree include a firefighter and an emergency service technician, who were both posthumously awarded with the Order of Valor.

A village council deputy from the republic of Ingushetia in the North Caucasus, who pursued armed attackers after they had shot and killed another official and injured several more people, was awarded a medal for bravery.

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