

May 7, 2024

To: Town of Minto Council

c/o Annilene annilene@town.minto.on.ca

Public question: How is it that a supposedly neutral petition is really a deceitful cover for hate and discrimination against the existence of our LGBT+ community, which is simply gender – a human right, not politics; gender being something we are all born with – in various forms - for millennia – but here it is directed against the LGBT+ community?

How can we be neutral when we hear comments like “I’m sick and tired of having their sexuality shoved down my throat? If the crux is about sexuality, maybe the petitioners should, instead, have drawn up a petition to support the town in addressing sexual assault, rape and incest in our community by heterosexuals.

Hopefully, we’re all here to support diversity and inclusiveness in our society – that is what Canada is about. To truly be open-minded and open-hearted (or Christian as some may call it) means being willing to support those who are discriminated against and marginalised in our society because of gender. We need to see past our differences and acknowledge that the LGBT+ community is discriminated against and detested by many. We hear comments about “I’m sick and tired of having their sexuality shoved down my throat” or “I’m fine with someone being gay just as long as I don’t have to see it.” “They are paedophiles” or “they’ll turn my children into gays and lesbians.” The latter comments are despicable.

Had this petition been positive and uplifting decrying poverty and homelessness in our community or standing up against domestic abuse, rape and incest, which the provincial government is declaring an epidemic, but instead, it is hate, hidden behind the word neutral. It is deceitful to put forth a supposedly neutral petition when we know it is about suppressing the LGBT community and their human right to not be discriminated against, harassed, beaten up and even killed. Many of our young LGBT members have committed suicide because they haven’t been accepted within our society. The reason putting up a Pride rainbow flag or banner is different than other banners is because it is about GENDER not politics, with gender being an inherent human right regardless of whom we are attracted to. Yet we are politicizing gender. Enabling the LGBT community to be seen and heard, free of fear and hate, is about giving them the human right to live their life in our communities feeling safe, respected and loved. It is about publically acknowledging what has existed forever and finally giving a group a right to be seated at the table without discrimination and fear.

From Jokelee Vanderkop, Palmerston