Human Rights Education Institute

Peace Lives Here

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To the City of Coeur d'Alene Mayor and Council,

As the Executive Director of the Human Rights Education Institute, I am writing this letter on behalf of the Institute, its supporters and myself. First and foremost, the Human Rights Education Institute supports the city ordinance that would prevent discrimination in housing, employment and public accommodations based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (LGBT community) in the city of Coeur d'Alene.

The Institute strongly supports this ordinance, as we believe that respect, dignity and equality is a basic right for each and every person in our community, state, nation and world. To knowingly exclude or discriminate against a person based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (LGBT community) is a violation of human rights as well as an acceptance of discriminatory behavior and views. We have battled ignorance of human rights in the form of racism, hate and criminal acts, and this city ordinance is a step in the right direction not only for Coeur d'Alene but also for Idaho, as we work to stop the stigmatization of North Idaho as non-accepting of diversity, respect and equality for all. As a state, we were one of the last to adopt the Martin Luther King Holiday. Today Coeur d'Alene has the opportunity to show leadership and commitment to human rights by setting precedence as one of the first cities in Idaho to adopt an ordinance that protects and demonstrates unity for all members of our community.

In conclusion, people break this issue down in various ways. Some see it through religious eyes, some through legal eyes and some through fearful eyes. As the Executive Director, it is my vision and passion that people see people as people and nothing less. To view people in this fashion, rather than defining them by their differences is a vital step that we need to take as a community towards peace and unity for all.

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