

February 4, 2013

The Honorable Sandi Bloem
Mayor, City of Coeur d'Alene
Coeur d'Alene City Council
710 E Mullan Avenue
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho 83814

Dear Mayor Bloem and City Council:

We have been encouraged to witness the passage of city ordinances preventing discrimination in housing, jobs and public accommodations based on sexual orientation, gender identity/expression in Sandpoint, Boise and Ketchum, Idaho. We also understand that the cities of Moscow, Pocatello and Idaho Falls have similar ordinances under consideration.

The Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations Board preamble supports the principle that all persons are created equal and we recognize the dignity and worth of every human being. All law-abiding individuals should enjoy the fruits of freedom and be free from discrimination based on such characteristics as sexual orientation, gender identity/expression. Our city has the opportunity to take yet another major step forward in guaranteeing the fundamental rights of all its residents by the passage of this anti-discrimination ordinance in housing, jobs and public accommodations.

We urge you to join the Idaho cities that have already made their communities more welcome and friendly to all their residents.

Over the past three decades the City of Coeur d'Alene has been recognized and honored throughout the Nation for its uncompromising and courageous stand in opposing those forces who came to our area promoting a doctrine of Neo-Nazism. Coeur d'Alene has been a great friend and landlord to the Human Rights Education Institute in one of the cities' buildings just to name an example of your many efforts on behalf of equality.

The city of Coeur d'Alene in 1990 was the first city in Idaho to receive the distinguished "All American City Award" from the National Civic League (formerly the National Municipal League). The Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations, on several occasions, has been informed by the staff of the NCL that one of the major reasons for the "All American City Award" to Coeur d'Alene was due to the strong stand the community had taken in promoting human rights.

In 1987, Coeur d'Alene Mayor Raymond Stone, Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations president and Catholic priest Bill Wassmuth and Kootenai County Undersheriff Larry Broadbent traveled to New York City Hall where the City of Coeur d'Alene accepted the internationally prestigious "Raoul Wallenberg Civic Award" for boldly standing up for human rights. In fact, the Raoul Wallenberg

Committee of the United States in presenting the award informed the delegation from Coeur d'Alene that the award had just been established in order to recognize and honor the people of Coeur d'Alene.

The City of Coeur d'Alene has the opportunity to move forward in advancing the principles we have all promoted for decades. We urge you to stand on the broad shoulders of those who have gone before you in confirming once again the dignity and rights of all our residents and share in this noble legacy.

Let us live up to that wonderful slogan: Coeur d'Alene, "the City with a Heart".

Respectfully,

Kootenai County Task Force on Human Relations Board of Directors

Christie Wood, president

Michelle Fink, vice-president

Ellen Stamsos, treasurer

Tony Stewart, secretary

P.S. Since this original letter was sent to the City of Coeur d'Alene, we are happy to report that the City of Moscow, Idaho has unanimously adopted their anti-discrimination ordinance.