

A Resolution to Affirm and Celebrate the Sonoma County LGBTQIA+ Community

Submitted by Commissioners Dillon-Shore, Jones Carter, and Quinn

WHEREAS, LGBTQIA+ stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, with the plus sign (+) encompassing both all other queer and trans identities and people living with a positive HIV status; and,

WHEREAS, according to the American Civil Liberties Union, there have been over 470 anti-LGBTQIA+ bills proposed in US state legislatures in 2023 so far, with some already adopted into law[1]; and

WHEREAS, those bills and laws aim to restrict for LGBTQIA+ people some of the basic freedoms and supports enjoyed by all Americans, including accurate identification, free speech and expression, healthcare, public accommodations, and curricula and schooling; and

WHEREAS, according to leading research by Boston University[2], these proposals cause real harm to LGBTQIA+ people and their families, even if they are ultimately defeated, and those measured harms include increased anxiety, clinical depression, suicidality and other forms of self-harm; and

WHEREAS, overt anti-LGBTQIA+ bias, transphobia, and homophobia have been present in Sonoma County as recently as June 10th, 2023 with the “straight pride” vandalism across downtown Santa Rosa, that targeted queer-owned businesses, businesses that are LGBTQIA+ safe spaces, and educational institutions; and

WHEREAS, local organizations like Positive Images, LandPaths, TransLife, and LGBTQ Connection create safe spaces such as clubs, meetings, and camps for LGBTQIA+ youth; and

WHEREAS, these spaces have a significant positive impact on the mental and physical health of these youth at a time when mental health issues are at an all-time high; and

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women affirms and celebrates our local LGBTQIA+ community; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women stands in solidarity with our trans siblings; and

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women affirms every person's right to determine their own gender identity and sexual orientation in their own time and with their own words; and

THEREFORE BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, the Sonoma County Commission on the Status of Women grants \$250 each to Positive Images, LandPaths, TransLife, and LGBTQ Connection, for a total of \$1000 in support of programs that empower LGBTQIA+ youth and adults to live authentically and safely in Sonoma County.

[1] ACLU <https://www.aclu.org/legislative-attacks-on-lgbtq-rights>

[2] Boston University's Project AVANT (Advancing Voices of Adolescents Identifying as Non-Binary and Transgender)
<https://www.bu.edu/articles/2023/how-will-anti-trans-laws-impact-transgender-and-gender-diverse-youth-mental-health/>