



HAMILTON AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL

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February 28, 2017

To the members of Hamilton City Council:

As union and labour leaders, we are proud to stand in solidarity with the transgender community as City Council discusses and votes on the proposed Transgender Protocol. We feel the same equity rights that we fight to entrench in our own collective agreements (within our workplaces) and constitutions (within our unions), should be extended to all Hamiltonians.

The Trans Protocol establishes equal rights for trans citizens in Hamilton. It seeks to end municipal government stigmatization of trans people. We feel that ending this stigmatization is important, for several reasons related to the core values of the labour movement.

When governments – whether municipal, provincial, or federal – treat trans people in an unequal way, that action normalizes and encourages transphobia and trans-misogyny across society. The Hamilton municipal government should be discouraging transphobia, and certainly never increasing it.

Trans workers often face enormous discrimination in the workplace and in the job market, because of their gender identity. Their workplaces are made less safe and less healthy, by transphobia and trans-misogyny. The transphobia and trans-misogyny of many employers often prevents trans people from finding secure employment, or jobs of any kind at all. Systemic transphobic barriers to employment and to safe workplaces push too many trans people into chronic underemployment and poverty.

We believe that all trans workers should have the opportunity to seek and hold jobs, on an equal basis to cisgender (non-trans) people. No one's job search or workplace should be less safe, because of her gender expression or gender identity. We believe that trans people have the right to flourish, as full and equal citizens.

The City of Hamilton must play its part in ending discrimination and encouraging equality.

Much of Hamilton's history is a story of trade unions and marginalized communities standing together, to protect human rights and dignity. Council's discussion of the proposed Trans Protocol is the latest moment in that history. We urge Council to affirm the rights of trans workers and all trans people.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anthony Marco".

Anthony Marco

President, Hamilton and District Labour Council (CLC)

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