

Are We Ready For Prime Time?

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Abstract

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The 2004 Democratic National Convention included seven transgender delegates. While this was historic, many people felt let down when the DNC left transgender people out of the party platform.

At the time, Steel City Stonewall Democrats Founder, Scott Safier said:

Needless to say, this is a great disappointment. This DNC convention will have more out and proud transgender delegates than ever before. Sadly, the trans community and their allies, may be the one group in attendance whose needs are left out of the platform entirely. It is not enough for the Democratic Party to oppose employment discrimination based on sexual orientation and ignore employment discrimination based on gender identity and expression. It is not enough for the Democratic Party to say 'Lesbian and Gay', and not 'Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender'. We must stand with our transgender brothers and sisters and assure they are included in the Democratic Party's vision for a Country where everyone is valued and respected, and nobody is left behind.

Since there wasn't transgender representation on the platform committee, Safier stood in. He put forth amendment to the platform but at the request of the transgender delegates he withdrew it. Saying:

Mr. Chairman, I am instructed by the transgender delegates to tell this committee that the trans-community stands united behind the Kerry/Edwards ticket and will work for a Democratic victory in November. At the request of the trans-delegation, and in recognition of this solidarity, I have been asked to withdraw this amendment, and do so now.

With the announcement of Diego Sanchez to the 2008 platform committee, one has to wonder if this is a signal that the Democratic Party is ready to add us to their platform. After the divisive bruising that

transgender community took during the ENDA battle, the addition in the transgender people to the platform would be a positive step forward. Conversely, being left out for the second time in eight years would solidify the message that transgender people are too controversial to even mention. Hopefully the addition of Sanchez to the platform committee isn't a token appointment, but a meaningful step forward.

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