

Rose Colored Glasses

By Marti Abernathey

Published March 21, 2007 | Updated March 31, 2026

https://www.transadvocate.com/rose-colored-glasses_n_86.htm

Abstract

In March of 2006, I suggested to members of the Indianapolis GLBT activist community that they not support the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) fund raisers in the state until HRC fully supported transgender people in hate crimes legislation. I received an email back from Donna Rose, who served on the HRC Business Council. "There is [...]"

Article

[Figure] transrights2.jpg

In March of 2006, I suggested to members of the Indianapolis GLBT activist community that they not support the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) fund raisers in the state until HRC fully supported transgender people in hate crimes legislation. I received an email back from Donna Rose, who served on the HRC Business Council.

"There is a significant amount of history to overcome â€" full of anger, frustration, and distrust. None of us can change the past. However, to believe that things are the same today as they have always been is absolutely and totally wrong. And, as long as I'm involved things will progressively get better. When I see things that I believe deserve criticism I'm not shy about speaking up. But, to make a blanket statement that HRC is not supportive of trans people is just plain wrong."

Yesterday the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007 (LLEHCPA) was re-introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman John Conyers (D-MI). It's the same bill that passed the House in 2005.

When Senator Edward Kennedy introduced the bill in the Senate, HRC supported it even though it WASN'T trans-inclusive (The version that passed the House had inclusive language). The bill died in the Senate without being voted on.

Today HRC is asking visitors to its website to either ask their Senator to support the bill, or thank them thank if they already support it. Kennedy's page is shown below:

[Figure] hrcnothanks.gif

Currently there is no hate crimes bill introduced to the Senate, so they're referring to the 2005 bill. We're supposed to thank Kennedy for CO-SPONSORING A NON-INCLUSIVE BILL!

In 2005 a sign on letter supported by more than 40 of Washington D.C.'s top national organizations was sent to Senator Kennedy's office requesting that he introduce the fully inclusive House version of

the Hate Crimes bill as an add on to the child safety act. HRC refused to sign the letter, saying they wanted to see the hate crimes bill in a conference committee where transgender-inclusive language could have been added.

They refused to confront Kennedy on his non-inclusive bill; now the HRC is asking visitors to THANK Senator Kennedy for NOT BEING INCLUSIVE?!

Donna, if you're listening, this shell game doesn't seem like progress to me. It seems like the actions of an organization that is ashamed to advocate for transpeople. Look at HRC's talking points for the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act. You'll see no mention of transgender people at all.

Maybe I'm deaf, but I don't hear your voice.

Suggested citation

Marti Abernathey. "Rose Colored Glasses." TransAdvocate, March 21, 2007.
https://www.transadvocate.com/rose-colored-glasses_n_86.htm