

TRANSADVOCATE

Transphobic Washington Blade Op-Ed

By Marti Abernathey

Published August 13, 2004 | Updated March 31, 2026

https://www.transadvocate.com/transphobic-washington-blade-op-ed_n_10.htm

Abstract

In response to the Op-Ed that ran in the Washington Blade I sent the following response: Chris, have you ever heard of transphobia? Transphobia is defined as a “fear or loathing of transgender/transsexual people and refers to the values and behaviors that express this fear or loathing.” This fear you have of being “trans-jacked” isn’t [...]

Article

In response to the Op-Ed that ran in the Washington Blade I sent the following response:

Chris, have you ever heard of transphobia? Transphobia is defined as a “fear or loathing of transgender/transsexual people and refers to the values and behaviors that express this fear or loathing.” This fear you have of being “trans-jacked” isn’t a political reality. You’ve stated that “polls show longstanding support from a strong majority” for ENDA. A 2002 HRC poll by Lake Snell Perry & Associates Inc. shows that:

- * 61 percent believe the country needs laws to protect transgender people from discrimination.

- * 57 percent incorrectly believe that it is not legal to fire a person just because they are transgender.

- * 48 percent of Americans would have “no problem” working with a transgender person, while only 8 percent claim they “would not” be willing to.

The polls show that people support trans-inclusion in legislation than they do gay marriage!

I don’t think it’s too mind boggling that the HRC has decided to only support trans-inclusive legislation. HRC says in its mission statement that states that it “is a bipartisan organization that works to advance equality based on sexual orientation and gender expression and identity, to ensure that gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Americans can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.” If the HRC states they will advocate for me is it too much to ask that they follow their own mission statement? It’s immoral to lie. If the HRC says that it advocates for us, it should do so. You compare and contrast black civil rights with queer civil rights and claim that African Americans didn’t advocate for gays. The last time I checked the NAACP has never stated in their mission statement that they advocate for gays and lesbians (see also, the HRC mission statement above).

The implication throughout your op-ed is that “that federal and state laws protect against gender bias.” Peter Oiler wasn’t protected against Winn Dixie, when he was fired for crossdressing in his off time. In your imaginary scenario it is true that most people see us all as “faggots.” The problem isn’t in what someone thinks, but the reason for the firing. If they fire a transperson, typically it’s because the person is transgender, not because of their sexual preference. Trans-inclusive legislation is smarter and more inclusive because it has much stronger teeth for all queer people. A woman that “looks like a dyke”, but is actually bisexual, is protected. An effeminate male that is heterosexual is covered as well with trans-inclusive legislation.

A claim that SONDA “would not have passed with trans-inclusive legislation” isn’t even supportable. But suddenly you know better than Matt Foreman does? Matt Foreman did need to heal the rift with the trans-community that was caused by the 2002 exclusion. He did NOT need to go to the depths that he did in the August 3, 2004 press release. He said, “I’ve already witnessed dozens of situations at the state and local level where legislators have initially said no to trans-inclusion. Our community, united, has said no way. In almost every instance, legislators have backed down and the bills have moved forward with trans-inclusion never an issue.” You’ve stated that “trans activists have it exactly backwards, and they know it” and that we haven’t “offered up even a single case” to back up our claims, yet you haven’t offered up much proof either. If the experience of a seasoned leader or poll numbers don’t ease your fears, what will it take Chris? Matt said, “I failed to recognize my own anti-trans ignorance and prejudices.” He took a look at his own ignorance’s and fears dead on. My hope is that eventually you will do the same.

Marti Abernathey

<https://www.transadvocate.com>

Related links:

<http://www.thetaskforce.org/news/release.cfm?releaseID=717>

<http://www.genderadvocates.org/News/HRC%20Poll.html>

Suggested citation

Marti Abernathey. "Transphobic Washington Blade Op-Ed." TransAdvocate, August 13, 2004.

https://www.transadvocate.com/transphobic-washington-blade-op-ed_n_10.htm