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NOVA SCOTIA RAINBOW ACTION PROJECT - LGBT Rights Group Wants NS to Amend Human Rights Act

HALIFAX – A Nova Scotian activist group wants the province to do more to protect transgendered people from discrimination.

"This is really a matter of equality," says Kevin Kindred, chairman of the Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project (NSRAP). "All Nova Scotians deserve equal protection under the law and right now those protections aren't clearly in place for transgendered people."

While Nova Scotia's Human Rights Act currently protects sex and sexual orientation, gender identity is not included. According to Kindred, this leaves transgender people open to discrimination and harassment. "This government has said it is committed to making our communities safer for all Nova Scotians," he said. "For transgender people, that safety includes having a Human Rights Act that tells the province that they deserve to be treated equally to anyone else."

The Human Rights Act offers legal protection in a variety of areas including workplace discrimination, housing discrimination, and discrimination in providing services.

The movement to protect gender identity and gender expression isn't limited to Nova Scotia. The Northwest Territories included gender identity in its human rights law in 2002. Ontario and Manitoba have both recently updated their provincial laws to include similar protections. Federally, an NDP private member's bill is working its way through Parliament, and thus far has passed second reading--with support even from some members of the Conservative party.

NSRAP is collecting signatures for a petition it plans to present to Justice Minister Ross Landry. Several hundred signatures have been collected and Kindred expects many more. Pride attendees can find the petition at many Pride events, including the Parade, as well as at Venus Envy or the Youth Project.

NSRAP will be marching in the Halifax Pride parade on Saturday, July 28th, to raise awareness of the need to amend the Human Rights Act. "This is how Pride began in Halifax twenty-five years ago, by demanding human rights protections for all" concludes Kindred, "We are all human and all deserve to be treated equally under the law."

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NSRAP spokesperson Kevin Kindred will be presenting a lecture on the Charter of Rights and Freedoms at the Spring Garden Road Memorial Public Library at noon on Friday, July 27.
For more information on the Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project, a provincial advocacy organization for LGBTQ Nova Scotians, visit http://nsrap.ca.

Equality for All

FOR BROAD CAST USE:

"All Nova Scotians deserve equal protection under the law" – that's the message an L-G-B-T-Q rights group is telling the provincial government.

The Nova Scotia Rainbow Action Project is collecting signatures to amend the provincial human rights act to include gender identity and gender expression.

Currently there aren't clear protections from discrimination for Nova Scotians who are transgender, gender non-conforming or intersex.

Spokesperson Kevin Kindred says now is the time for the government to ensure that all Nova Scotians are equally protected from discrimination and harassment.

The Rainbow Action Project will be collecting signatures throughout Halifax Pride Week and at the community fair on Saturday, July 28th. You can also sign the petition at Venus Envy and the Youth Project.

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