

From: Christine Hallquist <christinehallquist@gmail.com>
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Subject: H.783

Dear members of the House Committee on General, Housing and Military Affairs:
As you all are likely aware, I was the Democratic candidate for Governor in 2018. This was an historical event and it was notable that Vermont was the first state for this to happen. I know that was the result of many good people like you who came before me standing up for what is right and what is just.

I am writing to you all as I have some concern in the language found in section 5F found on the bottom of page 6 and the top of page 7 in House Bill No. 783 entitled "An act relating to recovery residences"

The following is the language:

- f) Unfair housing practices. Notwithstanding 9 V.S.A. §4503, a recovery residence may adopt policies and procedures to limit housing opportunities based on a resident's gender or gender identity, or on the basis of having one 1 or more minor children, provided:
 - (1) the limitation is designed to promote the health, safety, and welfare of residents; and
 - (2) the recovery residence does not otherwise discriminate on an unlawful basis.

I am concerned that we continue to construct language supporting the flawed idea we need to separate genders. We are learning just how fluid gender is and trying to identify gender and create specific facilities or attempt to provide language that enables specific gender constructs will also continue to support gender stereotypes. There is no reason, other than traditional gender biases, to be creating separate facilities. Remember, "separate but equal" was struck down by the Linda Brown v. Board of Education Supreme Court Case in 1954.

It also conflicts with Vermont Law. It will, in effect, create a loophole that will allow facilities to reject residents based on gender or gender identity. I don't understand why this language needs to be there. Here is Vermont law. "Vermont law bans discrimination based on both sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, public accommodations, education, housing, credit, insurance and union practices."

With warm regards,

Christine Hallquist – Hyde Park