

December 4, 2018

Law and Policy Committee 100 North Holliday Street Baltimore, Maryland 21202

To Whom It May Concern:

I joined Baltimore's LGBTQ Commission to represent lesbians in local government. Lesbians are under-represented in all sectors of society, government included. This Commission expressly calls for representation of lesbians as distinct from gay, bisexual, transgender, or queer individuals. As a lesbian representative, one of my goals is to defend the rights of lesbians as homosexual women. My peers elected me to serve as Co-Chair of the Law and Policy Committee, and I intend to fulfill this role by championing lesbian sovereignty.

One goal of Baltimore's LGBTQ Commission is to be as inclusive as possible. I meet this goal by sharing the latest notes and news from every Commission event with my fellow Committee members. I also recommend the inclusion of sex as a "personal characteristic" in the Baltimore Police Department's new policies regarding Strip Searches and Body Cavity Searches (Policy 1013); Warrantless Searches (Policy 1109); and Field Interviews, Investigative Stops, Weapons Pat-Downs & Searches (Policy 1112). Excluding sex from public policy threatens lesbians' sovereignty as female homosexuals.

To provide a safe, fair, and affirming environment for lesbians in Baltimore City, I recommend the Law and Policy Committee of Baltimore City's LGBTQ Commission certify the following statements:

- Sex is a material reality.
- Homosexuals are same-sex attracted.
- Lesbians are homosexual women.

Ethical work depends on informed judgments. Unfortunately, lesbians are often excluded from decision-making processes in LGBTQ communities. Lesbians who acknowledge biological sex are subject to violent attacks, verbal harassment, and stigmatization from other LGBTQ individuals<sup>1234</sup>. When lesbian voices are silenced, our community is effectively erased from the acronym we begin. In light of lesbians' exclusion from LGBTQ organizations and events, I thank my colleagues for granting lesbians a voice in Baltimore City's LGBTQ Commission by electing me Co-Chair of the Law and Policy Committee.

Sincerely, Julia Beck

<sup>1</sup> Lesbians who maintain female sexual boundaries "will be hung by their necks". Facebook, 14 June 2018, [imgur.com/a/XVjUZPM](https://imgur.com/a/XVjUZPM).

<sup>2</sup> "Open Letter to the National Center for Lesbian Rights." Women's Liberation Front, 30 June 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Cormier, Danielle. "Lesbians are being excluded from the Vancouver Dyke March in the name of 'inclusivity'." Feminist Current, 13 Aug. 2018.

<sup>4</sup> "Hateful Attacks on Lesbians at Pride Parades and Dyke Marches." Women's Liberation Radio News, episode 31, 1 Nov. 2018.