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Statements

Solidarity and celebration in the face of hate: BCFED statement on Pride Month

The BC Federation of Labour today released the following statement by federation president Sussanne Skidmore:

Pride was born as an act of protest, led by Black and Latina trans women. It was sparked in defiance of persecution, and an expression of both individual courage and community strength. It's a time to celebrate the 2SLGBTQIA+ members of our community, reflect on the history of queer struggle and liberation, and renew our solidarity.

For Pride, solidarity and celebration have always gone hand-in-hand — and they're just as important today as they were in the days of Stonewall. Well-organized voices of hate are spurring acts of violence and intimidation around the world, and British Columbia is no exception.

We have seen online harassment and abuse spilling over into in-person intimidation, as a hateful fringe in BC tries to emulate the attempts of American counterparts to silence queer voices, especially targeting the transgender community. Their goal is to normalize hate, and force 2SLGBTQIA+ people into the margins. We know all too well where that leads.

So it's heartening to see communities in BC rally in support of our 2SLGBTQIA+ members. It's crucial for all of us to make it clear how overwhelming that support is. And it's also vital that we not let the

voices of a hateful few detract from the very real victories we're winning.

At the provincial level, for example, the BC government has been working to fight hate on many fronts, and most recently has led the country by embarking on the work of removing outdated discriminatory language in our province's laws.

That progress is especially important within the labour movement. I'm proud to be the first out queer president of the BCFED. We are proving time and again that when unions stand up against hate, we can win — in legislatures, at the bargaining table, in the courts and in the community.

To my many fellow 2SLGBTQIA+ members of our affiliated unions, to the queer community and our allies here and around the world, a very happy Pride!