May 17, 2024 |

Statements

# International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia: “Solidarity is the answer to hate”

The BC Federation of Labour today released the following statement on the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia from BCFED President Sussanne Skidmore:

> Something is shifting.
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> For the past several years, a concerted right-wing campaign has attacked 2SLGBTQIA+ people, and particularly our trans community members. They have been subjected to harassment, fear-mongering and worse. And some deeply cynical politicians on the right — including BC’s two right-wing opposition leaders — have pandered to that campaign.
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> But there’s growing hope that people from all backgrounds are pushing back against the fear and disinformation. People supporting transgender rights and trans people consistently outnumber the protestors at anti-trans rallies. A recent recall effort targeting a BC cabinet minister over SOGI 123 — a classroom resource for teachers to help their students learn understanding and inclusion and protect queer and trans kids from bullying and harassment — failed overwhelmingly. And this week, a chorus of voices have spoken up as part of this week’s Rainbow Week of Action.

Our community is rising to the challenge, and we're proud that BC's unions have been a central part of that response. We are determined to build on the progress BC has made toward building justice, equity and inclusion. Our government is leading the country on human rights and justice for 2SLGBTQIA+ people, with measures ranging from rewriting over 200 provincial laws remove gendered and binary language, to restoring the BC Human Rights Commission.

We know, though, that the fight for justice is far from over — and that we're up against something larger. The same voices driving this fear campaign are attacking reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, efforts to fight hate and discrimination of all kinds, and the rights and protections working people rely on. Turning back that campaign and defeating the hate it promotes is part of our broader work of healing the damage and divisions caused by colonialism.

It shouldn't require courage to simple live openly as the person you are — or to speak for the rights of others. But it does. Today, we celebrate that courage. We reaffirm the whole-hearted support of BC unions for 2SLGBTQIA+ people everywhere, and recommit ourselves to fighting homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. And we restate this basic truth: that solidarity is the answer to hate.