

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION IN NORTH CAROLINA

NFTY-MAR/NFTY SAR Spring Kallot

April 16, 2016

BACKGROUND:

For more five decades the Reform Movement, has been a thought leader and advocate for full equality and inclusion of the LGBT community in North America and around the world. In the 50 years since Women of Reform Judaism first called attention to this important topic, the Union for Reform Judaism, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the Commission on Social Action, and NFTY have all passed additional resolutions dealing with issues specific to Reform Judaism - such as inclusion of gays and lesbians in the rabbinate and cantorate - as well as civil issues, including support for marriage equality initiatives, elimination of discrimination within the Armed Forces and the Boy Scouts, and support for explicit workplace non-discrimination and civil rights legislation. At the 2015 URJ Biennial, the general assembly unanimously passed the "*Resolution on the Rights of Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People*". The resolution affirmed the Movement's commitment to the full equality, inclusion and acceptance of people of all gender identities and gender expressions. It encouraged our institutions to use gender-neutral language, suggested training on issues of gender for religious school staff and called for advocacy on behalf of the transgender community.

Recently, North Carolina Governor Pat McCrory signed HB 2 into law, which puts LGBT North Carolinians at risk for discrimination in almost all aspects of their lives. This wide-sweeping legislation nullified already-existing local and municipal LGBT non-discrimination laws, and prevents similar ones from being passed in the future. The bill also requires all people to use restrooms inconsistent with their gender identity, specifically targeting transgender and gender non-conforming individuals.

WHEREAS, the NFTY Mission Statement states that NFTY is "A movement that build strong, *welcoming...* communities;" and

WHEREAS, In 1977, the UAHC General Assembly called for an end to discrimination against homosexuals, expanded upon this in 1987 by calling for full inclusion of gay and lesbian Jews in all aspects of synagogue life; and in 2015 by adopting a resolution on the rights and inclusion of transgender and gender non-conforming people; and

WHEREAS, we embrace the fundamental belief that all people are created *b'tzelem Elohim*, in the image of God, and this teaches us that we cannot tolerate discrimination against any person because of who they are.

WHEREAS, we want our actions together to reflect our values; and

WHEREAS, the recent passage of House Bill 2 in North Carolina requires all people to use restrooms that may be inconsistent with their gender identity, specifically targeting transgender and gender non-conforming individuals; and

WHEREAS, the recent passage of House Bill 2 in North Carolina nullifies LGBT non-discrimination laws that were already in place in cities across North Carolina and prevents similar ones from being passed in the future; and

WHEREAS, the recent passage of House Bill 2 in North Carolina makes it ever more imperative for states and the federal government to adopt LGBT non-discrimination laws; and

WHEREAS, The “*Resolution on the Rights of Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming People*,” unanimously passed at the 2015 URJ Biennial stated that (among other points), the Union for Reform Judaism:

Affirms its commitment to the full equality, inclusion and acceptance of people of all gender identities and gender expressions;

Encourages Reform congregations, congregants, clergy, camps, institutions and affiliates, *including NFTY*, to continue to advocate for the rights of people of all gender identities and gender expressions;

Urges the adoption and implementation of legislation and policies that prevent discrimination based on gender identity and expression, and that require individuals to be treated equally under the law as the gender by which they identify.

Calls on the U.S. and Canadian governments at all levels to review and revise all laws and policies to ensure full equality and protections for people of all gender identities and expressions;

WHEREAS, NFTY’s Mid Atlantic Region (MAR) and Southern Area Region (SAR) both serve communities within the state of North Carolina,

THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED that the regions of NFTY MAR and NFTY SAR oppose the passage and signage of House Bill 2 in North Carolina and actively advocates for its immediate repeal; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that NFTY MAR and NFTY SAR commend the work of the clergy and congregations in North Carolina who have done incredible work in response to HB 2 and in advocating for its repeal; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that NFTY MAR and NFTY SAR reject the message of HB 2, and wholeheartedly affirm that members of the LBGT community deserve the same dignity and respect as all people. HB 2's morally reprehensible message defies the values enshrined in the laws and Constitution of our state and our country;

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that NFTY MAR and NFTY SAR will continue to advocate for the rights of people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and gender expressions; and

LET IT BE FURTHER RESOLVED that NFTY MAR and NFTY SAR encourage other regions that face similar legislation to respond in a similar way.

Respectfully submitted,

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