

**CTH Public Statement to City Council regarding expansion
of the Non-Discrimination Ordinance
Member: Jennifer Ratajczak, MA, LCMHCS, NCC
February 22, 2016**

My name is Jennifer Ratajczak, and I am here on behalf of the Charlotte Transgender Healthcare Group. A rapidly growing group of medical and mental health clinicians holding over a dozen different credentials between us. Every day we are faced with the aftermath of transphobia and legal discrimination. We see individuals who lose remarkable careers, can't find safe shelter, and that even our youngest students are afraid to go to the bathroom at school. Grieving loss, after loss of our promising youth to suicide illustrates how hopeless it can feel to navigate our community.

At the end of the day, we are simply here regarding a civil rights issue that in many ways mirrors our history's past. Now, as in the past, prejudicial agendas fueled by irrational fears not based in fact have overshadowed the basic rights of a victimized and vilified minority population. As informed medical professionals we can assure you that gender diversity is a natural part of human diversity. Charlotte is a remarkable city, so let's not lose sight of the big picture and join the leading cities of this country by bringing our non-discrimination ordinance up to date to protect both our proud citizens as well as our great city.

**CTH Public Statement to City Council regarding expansion
of the Non-Discrimination Ordinance
President Jennifer Ratajczak, MA, LCMHCS, NCC
August 9, 2021**

Today I am here as the President of the Charlotte Transgender Healthcare Group. We are a growing group of 90 plus medical and mental health clinicians spread throughout the Greater Charlotte Area that come together to, amongst other things, treat the trauma our trans and POC siblings endure living in our community.

We were proud to support the non-discrimination ordinance that this council previously passed and look forward to renewed and more robust protections for our citizens. Every day we are faced with the aftermath of transphobia and legal discrimination that have come to be normalized and supported by many elected officials on the state and national level.

As I stated before, and as HB2 and the associated fallout demonstrated, these protections are needed to combat this civil rights issue and the ongoing prejudicial agendas based in rational fears and hatred.

As clinical professionals we can assure you that gender and sexual diversity are a natural part of human diversity, and also that these protections will be a necessary part of a long reparative journey. It is our hope that our city will stand as a beacon of hope in the south. A city that will not be bullied to abandon the basic rights of systematically victimized minority populations.

Charlotte is a remarkable city, and we are ready to stand proud with you in passing this ordinance.