

House Bill 516

Senate Local Government Committee

March 14, 2011

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I used to live in the City of Missoula but recently moved to the outskirts of town, still in Missoula County. My family grew up in town, using many of the activities that are available in the city/county area. Now, the Missoula City Ordinance on discrimination changes the old standard of gender to one of uncertainty and subjectivity. I am duly concerned that female members of my family will encounter men who claim to be "gender confused" in the women's dressing rooms, locker rooms and restrooms of the various recreation facilities and businesses we frequent. Irrespective of what proponent of the measure claim, it is unnatural and creates an atmosphere conducive to actions that could easily, and justifiably, be avoided. Additionally, the voters in Missoula were disregarded in their efforts to have a voice in the determination and such a matter should have been put to a vote of the people of Missoula.

I am also concerned that a law such as this could literally force churches to hire homosexuals and people with "gender-identity" issues. It also requires churches to provide the same services to homosexuals and gender-confused people that they provide to heterosexual people. Since the churches provides services for children and marriage and youth organizations, there is a requirement to force the churches to allow cross dressers, gender-modified, and others, including homosexuals, to work with our youth Sunday school, youth ministry and, likely, even in the nursery.

We do not believe that there should be different standards like this in every community across the state. This is a serious issue concerning families, churches and businesses in general. I strongly urge you to support **HB 516** and maintain a statewide standard on discrimination.

Thank you.

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