

Melissa Kwasny
Box 123
Jefferson City, MT 59638
pricklypear@wildblue.net

March 13, 2011

Dear Senators:

I am writing to urge you to vote against HB 516 which would repeal the ordinances that the people of Bozeman and Missoula voted for, which protect GBLT people from discrimination in employment and housing. This bill *solves no problem*. Its only purpose is to express bigotry. Whether one's religion condones or condemns the behavior of others is no reason to deny basic human rights to anyone, rights that most citizens enjoy. To do so is religious imperialism, which should not have a place in any democracy. The only purpose, as far as I can see, of this bill is to express hate. Therefore, this bill creates a problem.

The Montana Human Rights Act should, of course, include GBLT people under its protection. Until then, the cities of Missoula and Bozeman should be commended for their courage and compassion rather than insulted. This legislature has taken a stand against big government, and yet this bill interferes with the will of the people in these cities, imposing a state mandate over a local one.

Would any of you look me in the eye and tell me that I do not deserve the same rights of basic protection against discrimination that you enjoy?

Respectfully,

Melissa Kwasny