



April 17, 2018

Chattanooga City Council
1000 Lindsay Street
Chattanooga, TN 37402
Re: Call for Equity Ordinance

Hello City Council Members,

As a local business owner, a life-long Chattanooga, and a concerned citizen, I'd like to wholeheartedly express my company's support of the Call for Equity Ordinance, issued recently by the Chattanooga Queer Community Forum.

As we have learned from Mayor Berke's fine leadership, we are a stronger community when everyone has a seat at the table. I remember how impressed I was at Mayor Berke's response to the tragic 2015 shooting at the US Navy Reserve as he immediately ensured the Muslim members of our community felt safe and protected from any undue retaliation. The best moments in our city's history has been when we protected the most vulnerable of our citizens from any form of discrimination or abuse.

I have no doubt that our city and your ordinances will be at the forefront of ensuring equal rights and treatment of the LGBTQ members of our community. As a mental health therapist, I can tell you that homosexuality is not a new trend sweeping our nation – rather, people of all sexual orientations have long been a part of our community, nation and world - and it's time that we make room for them. LGBTQ people deserve more than tolerance, they deserve to be celebrated, accepted and protected at the same level of any other community member.

LGBTQ individuals are almost three times more likely than others to experience a mental health conditions such as depression or anxiety disorder. The fear of coming out and being discriminated against can lead to depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, suicidal thoughts and substance abuse. Let's do all we can to lessen this statistic and make our city a welcoming place for all.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rachel McCrickard".

Rachel McCrickard
CEO, Motivo
(423) 605-4736