

May 18, 2018

Dear Brandon,

Thank you for your letter and the questions that you have posed regarding how I as a candidate and we as a society need to reconsider how we deal with gender and sexually diverse communities. This is clearly a matter that must be brought into the mainstream debate, even if some would rather avoid the topic.

From my earliest days I have believed that we should have equal respect for all and the opportunity to be the person(s) who we want to be. Having basic respect for me as a unique person, makes all of us better able to contribute to our shared society, however we choose to do that.

It is an understatement to say that historically society has shunned the LGBTQ individual. Unfortunately this behavior is still far too prevalent. Of late we are becoming more aware of the personal hurt that stems from these attitudes and the injury to society that diminishes us all. This realization is occurring not only with gender and sexually diverse communities but similarly with people of color and indigenous peoples.

Awareness of the wrong is the first step on this journey. We must follow this up with a process of better understanding and then considered action for change in many parts of our daily lives from education to healthcare, to long term care, to employment and many more.

I appreciate the 17 questions that you have raised in your survey but I would do you a disservice by providing short incomplete answers. That said I am open to hearing the concerns of gender and sexually diverse individuals to better understand the issues and solutions. I am under no illusion that this is simple challenge or that society can be changed overnight. Regardless, this is the path we must take. I know the Liberal government has a particular sensitivity to gender and sexually diverse persons and I am personally prepared to work with you.

Your provincial candidate,

Gerry Marshall