

I come before you as a woman who has worked for 50 years to address HomoBiandTransphobia in Canada, and last year was honoured to be awarded The Order of Canada for that work. In 1971 I was the only woman to sign 'We Demand' the first public demand for Equal Rights for LGBT, in 2001 I performed the first legalized same sex marriage and after my election to this Legislature, I passed the most LGBTQ pieces of legislation by one person in Canada. They included Toby's Law named after my Trans Church Music Director, adding Trans Rights to the Ontario Human Rights Code, a Bill like all of my Bills made law with all party support. One of the co-signatories of that Bill was Deputy Premier Christine Elliott. She, I and Yasir Nacqvi, the other signatory were given awards by Parents and Families of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) delivered by the comedian and actress, Rosie O'Donnell. I was saddened to hear that Ms. Elliott did not vote against the section of this Bill before us that gives university and degree granting status to Charles McVety's Canadian Christian College a man who has always opposed trans rights and trans people.

Why do I and many others consider granting a College accreditation that espouses racist, and homophobic views wrong? It is because such views result in death. Some 33% of LGB children attempt suicide and almost 50% of Trans and nonbinary children as compared to 7% of straight children attempt suicide. LGBTQ rights are at their heart about saving lives, particularly the lives of our most vulnerable children. Adding Trans rights to the OHRC helped save lives. McVety opposed that Bill. He also opposed every other LGBTQ Rights Bill I was part of or originated and passed into law, like Banning Conversion Therapy in Ontario in 2015, like Parent Equality for LGBTQ families, like the Trans Day of Remembrance in 2017, that Minister Lisa McLeod was a cosignatory on. Anything and everything that could prevent such deaths, Charles McVety has opposed.

Let me be very clear. His views are not supported by mainstream Christianity. There is an entire network of recognized Christian Seminaries in Ontario. Here in Toronto the Toronto School of Theology under the University of Toronto includes Roman Catholic

Colleges, Presbyterian, Anglican and the United Church of Canada Colleges. The United Church of Canada of which I am a part, having been ordained in 1996 is the largest Protestant Denomination in Canada with over 2000 Churches and has been ordaining openly gay and lesbian clergy since 1988. All of the Toronto Schools of Theology are bound and adhere to the inclusive policies of the University of Toronto.

McVety often pretends to speak for the Roman Catholic community but Pope Francis himself has supported same sex civil marriage and advocates for the love of all people. Our Catholic School System has supported Gay Straight Alliances, the Physical Health and Safety Curriculum, again both initiatives that Mr. McVety opposed.

It is certainly not Christian to hate ones neighbour, as McVety does with our Muslim neighbours having called Islam “Hateful” and a “War Machine” or our Jewish neighbours who through The Canadian Jewish Congress opposed one of McVety’s other attempts in 1998 to achieve accreditation based on his anti-

semitism. Nor is it Christian to call Haitians “Practicing Satanists” another of McVety’s quotes.

Biblically, Jesus, says nothing about homosexuality but does say, 2000 years before Lady Gaga in Matthew 19:12 that “some are born not finding heterosexual marriage their calling” or ‘some are born that way’. Taking instances of homophobia out of context as McVety does is poor biblical exegesis and poor scholarship. By that measure we would be condoning slavery, and a myriad of other now justifiably illegal acts. The Christian Television Station here in Canada representing conservative Christianity removed McVety’s show from the air because of his views and they are known as the voice of the Evangelical Christian Community. The Canadian Broadcast Standards Council condemned him as well for such lies, as suggesting homosexuals preyed on children. The Conservative Sun News Network has also disavowed him.

As far as being degree granting Premier Bill Davis, a Conservative opposed giving the Canadian Christian College degree granting status in 1983 (seeing it as

part of what were called 'degree mills' back then) Questionable financial practices like loans totaling almost 900000 from his own College by Mr. McVety and his son would not be tolerated in a legitimate university. The Post-Secondary Education Quality Assessment Board has not vetted the Canadian Christian College either. The Ontario Confederation of University Faculty Associations have also condemned the potential degree granting status Of the Canadian Christian College.

I appeal to the Conservative members of this panel, whose party has acted in the best interests of our vulnerable and our precious children in our past by voting for equal rights for the LGBTQ2S+ community, all the Bills now law I've mentioned—don't recast your party as the voice of homo/bi/transphobia and racism. Keep your own faith and your own tradition alive.

May I remind those assembled here of a quote by the great hero and theologian of the German Christian Resistance to Hitler, "Silence in the face of

evil is evil. God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act.”

To conclude, let me say to all those of you on this committee it is evil to promote hatred. To you who love and desire to protect our most vulnerable do not allow hatred to pass as love. Do not allow hatred to pass as faith. Our children and all of us, are counting on you.