



Seattle City Council

October 21, 2013

The Hon. Andrey Yushmanov
Consul General
The Russian Federation
600 University Street, 25th Floor
Seattle, WA 98101

Dear Consul General Yushmanov:

We appreciate the presence of the Russian Federation Consul office in Seattle and the direct communication and assistance your presence makes possible for the greater Seattle area's Russian population. Russian immigrants and visitors to our city form a bridge between our two countries. Seattle prides itself as a welcoming, progressive city with trade, education and arts connections all over the world. Recent news from Russia regarding the treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth and adults causes us grave concern.

Let there be no mistake - Seattle condemns any kind of discrimination, any kind of marginalization, any kind of human rights violations against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. Russia's proposed and enacted laws tear apart families; take hope away from lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth; endanger health; and prohibit lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people from speaking freely. The impacts of these measures reverberate negatively around the world.

Our countries have different histories, political and otherwise, but our people want similar things - safety, freedom from want, pursuit of happiness, freedom from oppression. Though we still have work to do, we believe our city's approach to welcoming all people and facilitating all people's ability to build a great life in our city is fundamental to our economic success. Seattle is home to some of our country's leading organizations when it comes to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender achievement in business, education, social support and the arts. We believe supporting diversity leads to attracting talent and innovation, hallmarks of a successful city.

Russia will soon be on the world stage hosting the Winter Olympics in Sochi. Unfortunately, the oppression and attacks against lesbian, gays, bisexuals and transgender people mar Russia's face to the world.

Seattle residents have a long and proud history of activism in pursuit of positive social change locally and around the world. As a continuation of that work, we will be co-hosting a forum November 18 at Seattle City Hall with local partners, including All Out and the World Affairs Council, on the subject of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender human rights in Russia and internationally. We will send you a more detailed invitation to this forum soon and hope you will be able to attend.

Sincerely,



Sally J. Clark, City Council President



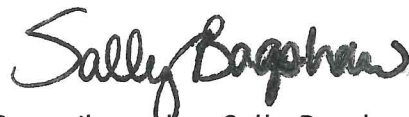
Councilmember Tim Burgess



Councilmember Jean Godden



Councilmember Nick Licata



Councilmember Sally Bagshaw



Councilmember Richard Conlin



Councilmember Bruce A. Harrell



Councilmember Mike O'Brien



Councilmember Tom Rasmussen