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# San Jose Officials Take Stand Against Lgbtq Hate

Oct 30, 2023



By Lorraine Gabbert

San Jose Spotlight

A resolution to support San Jose's LGBTQ+ community sparked an emotional outcry from residents and politicians.

The San Jose City Council last week unanimously declared its support for transgender and broader LGBTQ+ communities after a wave of hateful remarks

from a conservative parents group, Informed Parents of Silicon Valley.

Councilmembers Pam Foley and Omar Torres authored the resolution after Informed Parents of Silicon Valley had distributed brochures in local school districts urging parents to opt their children out of sex education classes including LGBTQ+ supportive curriculum and ban LGBTQ+ themed books in school libraries.

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"These fliers contain misinformation and hateful dog whistles that target our LGBTQ community," Foley said during the Tuesday meeting. "I cannot stand by silently while members of our community are marginalized and attacked."

Foley said the group also targeted teachers by spreading misinformation about their integrity and qualifications.

Torres, who is gay, said he and Foley received death threats after standing up for the LGBTQ+ community.

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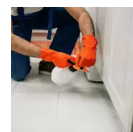
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"I hurt because we have reached an era, unfortunately, where our youth, our community can't be their authentic self," Torres said, his voice breaking with emotion. "We are now back living in fear of who we are and who we love. I stand here crying not only as a councilmember, but... as a human who has been the target of hate solely because of my sexual orientation. Let us send a clear message that we will not be silenced, and we will not be driven back into the closet."

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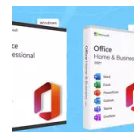
In a letter to councilmembers, Informed Parents of Silicon Valley said parents have a right to opt their kids out from public school curriculum based on the California education code and asking elected officials to exclude those parents is an assault on the First Amendment.

One of those parents said the organization wants to empower parents to know their rights.

"We're not trying to convince them to go one way or the other," Roy Dumont told San Jose Spotlight. "We're

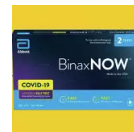
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saying California law supports parents to make the decision. They should be involved. They should know what's going on in the schools."

The resolution asked elected officials to condemn anti-LGBTQ+ activities in local schools. It called for affirming support for LGBTQ+ communities. It said children have a right and need, especially at school, to feel and be safe and supported. Foley said a survey last year showed 45 percent of LGBTQ+ youth considered attempting suicide, but supportive schools and communities reduced these rates

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The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors also passed a resolution in August supporting gender-affirming care--social, psychological, behavioral and medical practices--countywide aimed at supporting a person's gender identity. That same month, the San Jose Unified School District unanimously passed a pride resolution.

Todd Davidson, a member of Stone Church of Willow

Glen, spoke out against Informed Parents of Silicon Valley's actions.

"This group's divisive mission to eliminate critical education programs and spread misinformation and hateful messages against members of the LGBTQ+ community and racial minorities has no place here," he said. "My faith cannot abide any group or individual that hides behind morals and value statements to divide and exclude."

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