

Janzen, Heather

Subject: FW: Email - Request to Speak - Eli Hartman - 2SLGBTQIA+ - CK 100-026
Attachments: Hartman, Eli - City Council Regular Business Meeting Agenda Item 8.5.1 Comments.docx

From: Web NoReply <web-noreply@Saskatoon.ca>
Sent: Friday, March 21, 2025 2:44 PM
To: City Council <City.Council@Saskatoon.ca>
Subject: Email - Request to Speak - Eli Hartman - 2SLGBTQIA+ - CK 100-026

--- Replies to this email will go to [REDACTED] ---

Submitted on Friday, March 21, 2025 - 14:44

Submitted by user: [REDACTED]

Submitted values are:

I have read and understand the above statements.: Yes

I do not want my comments placed on a public agenda. They will be shared with members of Council through their online repository.: No

I only want my comments shared with the Mayor or my Ward Councillor.: No

Date: Friday, March 21, 2025

To: Her Worship the Mayor and Members of City Council

Pronouns: They/them/theirs

First Name: Eli

Last Name: Hartman

Phonetic spelling of first and/or last name: ee-lie heart-man

Email: [REDACTED]

I live outside of Saskatoon: No

Saskatoon Address and Ward:

Address: [REDACTED] Taylor St E

Ward: Ward 9

What do you wish to do ?: Request to Speak

If speaking will you be attending in person or remotely: In person

What meeting do you wish to speak/submit comments ? (if known):: City Council Regular Business Meeting - Wednesday, March 26th 2025.

What agenda item do you wish to comment on ?: 8.5.1 Blake Tait – Denounce 1 Million March 4 Children
GPC2023- 1103

Comments:

I wish to state my opposition to the adoption of the safe city designation for 2SLGBTQIA+ peoples.

Attachments:

- [Hartman, Eli - City Council Regular Business Meeting Agenda Item 8.5.1 Comments.docx](#) 15.36 KB

Will you be submitting a video to be vetted prior to council meeting?: No

Eli Hartman (they/them)



RE: 8.5.1 Blake Tait – Denounce 1 Million March 4 Children GPC2023- 1103

Good morning council. My name is Eli. I use they/them pronouns and have seen and felt the effects of the anti-queer sentiment in this city more times over than I am capable of recalling here today. While I appreciate the idea of wanting to declare safety for all 2SLGBTQIA+ people in the city, we have far more work to do before that can be achieved on a level worth the official designation.

I currently work with young children in public spaces. I am not speaking on behalf of my employer, but merely to my own experience working with the public in that space over the span of my career. As someone in charge of running storytimes, dance parties, and other children's and teen programming, I have spent a lot of time making sure the resources and programs are equal and open to all. Many queer patrons have come to me specifically because they feel safe in the space I aim to create. However, on a larger scale, I do not feel safe fully identifying as my true self in the workplace.

Though I know there are anti-discrimination policies in place for me as an employee, this does not reflect the attitudes the public have towards my existence. I am regularly in fear of people seeing my position working with their children and deciding not to bring them back to the programs and classes should I be any louder or prouder than a lanyard subtly hinting at my pronouns. This directly affects the programs themselves as well as those children, because they don't see a safe, open space and people who could potentially represent them. I know I am also not the only one within my company who has faced this backlash; something as simple as reading a book titled Pride Puppy to a group of kindergarten students has already resulted in parents angrily taking their kids home, saying that we are indoctrinating their children. I fear even stating my pronouns at work out of concern I will find out the opinions of coworkers and the public that are directly in contrast to my existence. Because of this, it has become hard to stand up for myself in a space where I am told all are welcome.

Until the public attitude has shifted, whether that be through education, policy, or more active protections for queer folks in the city, I know I will be putting myself second, prioritized below my job. I cannot afford not to work, and I am lucky as a queer and trans person in the city to have a job with the level of protection it has. I also know that not being able to fully offer myself into my work at risk of facing backlash from the public I work with means I cannot do my job to the level I strive for.

We have seen some public sentiment and support for trans rights on a grander scale through protests organized by activists like those organizing the events here today. However, until there are proper protections in place to ensure public safety for trans folks, the vocal minority choosing to take more irrational action and yell louder will leave many people in Saskatoon, like me, in fear of the retaliation that might come. Until there is more collaboration with the queer community in policy making, and initiatives for queer safety are acted on as a priority, not an afterthought, I cannot in good faith support the decision to label Saskatoon as a safe city for queer people. And to say so breaks my heart. I hope to have kids of my own someday, and I hope that eventually, I will be able to tell them that Saskatoon is in fact a safe place for them, for me, and anyone else within the queer community.