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October 9th, 2008

Attention: Select Committee (Linda Kolody, Hon.Marian Horne, Steve Cardiff, Don Inverarity, Brian MacDonald)

Thank you for holding the Whitehorse open public forum last night at the High Country Inn - it was inspiring to see how many people were passionate about our Yukon Human Rights, as well as seeing democracy at work. The four of us from the byte team came away feeling empowered and invigorated. I also want to thank your committee for taking the time to review and listen to the proposed amendments to the Act. It is evident that you all care very much and want to hear from the people you serve. It must be quite overwhelming to see how many areas need to be altered. I wish you all the best in figuring that out. Please note, that my organization supports the proposed amendments that the Yukon Human Rights Commission has put forward. It was evident that they work very closely with the document and have found the areas that need to be changed in order for the document as a whole to be more effective. It was wonderful hearing Melissa say "let's shoot for the stars". We are extraordinary here in the Yukon and their proposed amendments would only demonstrate it once again.

I am writing to you all today to highlight some of the areas that the Yukon Human Rights Commission has proposed that I feel need your utmost attention, section 37 and section 6.

Your human rights are supposed to protect you against all forms of discrimination. According to the Yukon Human Rights Act section 7 it is illegal for someone to discriminate against you because of your age (section 7 (e)), however, it is evident that section 37 of the same Yukon H.R. Act does not fall under its own criteria. Currently, in the Yukon under the YHRA, if you are under the age of 19, you cannot make a complaint that you are being discriminated against because of your sexual orientation. That means that if for example, you are under 19 years and if every day when you go to school people call you "gay", "faggot", and they spit on you, or push you around or harass you because you are gay, or think you are gay, you would not be protected because of the definition under the Yukon Human Rights Act. The definition of sexual orientation in the Act is: "sexual orientation means heterosexual, homosexual, or bi-sexual and refers only to *consenting adults* acting within the law." I agree with the Yukon Human Rights Commission and propose that the words *consenting adults* is removed from section 37.

In section 6 of the current Act, the right to enjoyment and disposition of property, needs to address Homelessness, right to housing and social conditions. As it sits currently it is clear that property owners will be able to file a complaint against someone who is making

too much noise. However, perhaps we should look at issues that have a larger impact on Yukoners – homelessness, housing, and social conditions. The proposed amendment brought forward by the HRC is not saying if someone is homeless they can file a complaint – it is saying that landlords cannot evict residents without just cause if it results in homelessness. Since there is an issue of homelessness here in our Territory, wouldn't it be beneficial to change such wording in the Act to prevent a larger homelessness problem here in our Territory.

Thanks again for all of your hard work,

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