



Opposition to fairness ordinance makes no sense

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Kudos to Bowling Green City Commissioner Brian “Slim” Nash for his efforts to enact a fairness ordinance, “which would prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.”

Regardless of where you stand on this issue, what I find disconcerting is the reluctance of the other commissioners to seriously consider the measure – or to fully explain their aversion to a piece of legislation that would arguably help prevent discrimination against many of our friends and neighbors.

One of the stated reasons for not supporting the ordinance is that “we don’t need it” because the rights of these individuals “are already protected by other statutes.”

I’m not sure I understand the reasoning here. The 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution formally abolished slavery in 1864. So why – a full hundred years later – was the Civil Rights Act of 1964 still needed?

Because simply abolishing slavery did not change the attitudes and behaviors of those who felt there wasn’t anything wrong with the practice. Consequently, it took decades of protests, demonstrations and judicial activism to finally make significant progress toward eradicating this inherent evil. And we still have considerable work to do.

The reality is you can never have too many guarantees when it comes to thwarting discrimination in all its ugly forms. And irrespective of whether your objections are on religious, philosophical, or moral grounds, preserving the fundamental rights of our fellow citizens should be an overarching priority for everyone.

Everyone is entitled to their personal beliefs. If you think someone’s lifestyle is a sin, that’s certainly your prerogative.

What is not acceptable, however, is to fail to treat that person with the respect, dignity and equality they deserve as a human being – and as a member of a society that should see all bias and prejudice as intolerable.

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