

Rainbow Commission resolution regarding equality and civil rights in the state of Massachusetts – passed at the October 18, 2018 meeting

The Massachusetts House of Representatives and Senate approved the addition of gender identity to the Massachusetts Public Accommodations Law (M.G.L c. 272, §§ 92A, 98 and 98A) on July 7, 2016. This legislation, An Act relative to transgender anti-discrimination (S. 2407), was signed into law the following day. The updated Public Accommodations Law has been in full effect since October 1, 2016.

The November 6, 2018 statewide election includes ballot question 3, considering whether to uphold or repeal the part of the Massachusetts Public Accommodations Law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender identity.

Full and equal access to public accommodations is a basic human right. Trans and gender non-conforming people must be safe from discrimination in public spaces in order to fully participate in civic life. The repeal of this law would have a devastating effect for transgender and gender non-conforming family members, friends, and neighbors, and therefore to our community as a whole.

Arlington Town Meeting in 2017 created this LGBTQIA+ Rainbow Commission to promote equality-affirming policies regarding the full spectrum of sexual orientations and gender identities, and one of the town's principles is to "be known for the warm welcome and respect we extend to all."

Therefore, the Rainbow Commission endorses the Yes on 3 effort by Freedom for All Massachusetts to uphold the current law and say clearly: Discrimination has no place in Massachusetts and no place in Arlington.