

To: House Committee on State Government & Elections
Re: HR-6125 , House Resolution proclaiming solidarity with LGBTQIA+ Rhode Islanders
From: Rev. Darin R. Collins, Pastor Berean Baptist Church Harrisville RI & Social Justice
Commissioner for the Rhode Island State Council of Churches

Since President Trump's five executive orders that specifically target transgender people's identities, health care, education, and transgender people serving in the military, as well as three more orders targeting diversity, equity, and inclusion, I have notice a significant increase stress and anxiety among the members and friends of my little church. I've had an older adult, who is a member of the LGBTQ+ community, in my office seeking support because they have been harassed by neighbors who feel emboldened by the President's actions. I've had parents of Transgender Children office as well. afraid of bullying in the community and schools because they know that 821 bills have been introduced in 49 states that target the trans community, and they are afraid that Rhode Island could be next. And those who reach out to me due to stress and anxiety are not just church members. We have started a support group at our church to offer community-wide support to our LGBTQIA+ neighbors.

Such demonizing and dehumanizing is unacceptable in a nation that boldly proclaims, 'In God We Trust.' Every member of the LGBTQIA+ community is a beloved child of God and a citizen entitled to enjoy life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Prejudicial and discriminatory orders and policies are grave injustices that must be resisted. I am grateful for House Resolution 6125 and the encouragement and peace of mind it will bring to my LGBTQ+ siblings. I fully support this resolution and encourage its passing.

Rev. Darin R. Collins