Councilmember David Grosso

A PROPOSED RESOLUTION

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Councilmember Grosso introduced the following resolution, which was referred to the Committee on _____.

To declare the sense of the Council that laws stigmatizing homosexuality both in the United States and around the world violates human rights and undermines the United States commitment to combating HIV/AIDS globally.

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the "Sense of the Council on Anti-Homosexuality Laws Resolution of 2014."

Sec. 2. The Council finds that:

(1) Governments here in the United States and around the world are developing new measures to repress their citizens and residents based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression.

(2) Uganda recently joined countries such as Iran, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, and Sudan, in criminalizing homosexuality with laws that makes being homosexual punishable by life in prison.

(3) Uganda's legislation comes six weeks after Nigerian President Goodluck Jonathan signed into law a ban on homosexuality that imposes 14-year prison terms for anyone entering a same-sex union.

(4) In India, the Supreme Court has refused to reconsider its decision re-imposing criminalization of homosexuality when it overturned a lower court's decision in December 2013.

(5) In February 2014, Russia passed a law banning adoption by same-sex couples and by single individuals from countries where same sex marriage is legal, six months after passing a law prohibiting "homosexual propaganda."

(6) From Zimbabwe to Wyoming, LGBT individuals have been detained, attacked, killed, and even denied basic health care.

(7) Such laws undermine the United States commitment to combating HIV/AIDS globally through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief by stigmatizing and criminalizing vulnerable communities.

(8) The prohibition and penalization of homosexual behavior is a violation of human rights impeding against the principles of freedom and liberty.

Sec. 3. It is the sense of the Council that:

(1) The "Anti-Homosexuality Bill" signed into law by Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni which includes the extreme penalties of death and life in prison, poses a serious threat to the life, liberty, and security of the person and, if acted upon, would be a clear violation of human rights and will set a troubling precedent for other countries.

(2) We deplore and condemn all acts, in both word and action, that use the government as an instrument of discrimination, persecution, and legislating against the LGBT community and its supporters.

(3) The District of Columbia government respects the freedom of religion, but

this freedom cannot be used as an excuse for individuals to treat certain residents or visitors, based upon identity or sexual orientation, as inferior and less deserving of services and accommodations than others.

(4) The United States Department of State should increase efforts to encourage the decriminalization of homosexuality in every country and to use all means possible to increase the number of countries supporting decriminalization, including, but not limited to, the United Nations, trade and diplomatic relationships, and the implementation of international treaties and declarations on human rights.

(5) The District of Columbia shall be declared a "safe place" for anyone in the United States or throughout the world who has been discriminated against or persecuted based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression.

Sec. 4. The Secretary to the Council shall transmit copies of this resolution, upon its adoption, to the President and Vice President of the United States, the Delegate from the District of Columbia in the United States Congress, and to the United State Secretary of State.

Sec. 5. This resolution shall take effect immediately.