

RESOLUTION NO. 140201

Establishing additional priorities for the Missouri General Assembly's 2014 Legislative Session opposing Senate Bill 916 and any similar legislation that would preempt the City's civil rights protections based on sexual orientation and other categories not included within the Missouri Human Rights Act, and supporting passage of Senate Bill 757 and any similar legislation that would extend the protections of the Missouri Human Rights Act to include sexual orientation or gender identity, and directing the City Clerk to notify members of the Kansas City delegation to the General Assembly and the Missouri Municipal League.

WHEREAS, amendments to the Missouri Religious Freedom Restoration Act have been introduced as Senate Bill 916; and

WHEREAS, the amendments change the current rule that a governmental authority may not restrict a person's free exercise of religion unless the restriction is in a law of general applicability and does not discriminate against or among religions, to remove that exception for generally applicable laws; and

WHEREAS, the amendments also change the test to apply to such laws by requiring any regulation that touches religious beliefs to be the least restrictive means to further a compelling governmental interest; and

WHEREAS, the amendments will allow religiously-based discrimination against LGBT people in Kansas City, where it is now unlawful; and

WHEREAS, although the bill's supporters state the bill does not allow discrimination but only permits the unfettered exercise of religious freedom, the impact of the exercise of those religious beliefs can result in discrimination against LGBT people; and

WHEREAS, the economic concerns of the City will be damaged by the implementation of discriminatory laws; and

WHEREAS, the imposition of restrictions on public accommodations is antithetical to Kansas City's efforts to create a fair society; and

WHEREAS, the question of how government must deal with religious objections to government regulation is currently before the U.S. Supreme Court and need not yet be addressed by proponents of S.B. 916; and

WHEREAS, also before the General Assembly is the Missouri Nondiscrimination Act, Senate Bill 757 that would extend the protections of the Missouri Human Rights Act based on sexual orientation and gender identification; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF KANSAS CITY:

RESOLUTION NO. 140201

That the City adopts the following additional major priority and position as part of its state legislative agenda for the Missouri General Assembly's 2014 Legislative Session:

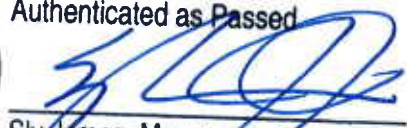
Neighborhoods & Healthy Communities
Finance & Governance
Economic Development

1. Although fully supportive of every person's right to believe as they wish with respect to any issue and for any reason, the City opposes attempts, such as S.B. 916, to render individual religious beliefs laws unto themselves by allowing discrimination against any person protected by the City's civil rights ordinances.
2. The City supports amendment of the Missouri Human Rights Act to include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes of people as would be established by S.B. 757 or similar legislation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be provided by the City Clerk to all members of the Kansas City legislative delegation to the Missouri General Assembly, and to the Missouri Municipal League.



Authenticated as Passed


Sly James, Mayor


Marilyn Sanders, City Clerk

MAR 06 2014

Date Passed