



KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH

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Office of the Borough Mayor

May 16th, 2022

Notice of veto:

Grant funding for the Ketchikan Pride Alliance

Honorable members of the Assembly,

The long standing historical practice of the Borough has been to provide grants to organizations with broad public support that focus their activities on the service of others. Funding has been provided for decades to non-profits for Senior Services, youth activities, homelessness, the disabled, substance abuse treatment, the Arts, etc. Within those groups, many sub-groups are served, including members of the LGBTQ community.

The proposal to fund the Ketchikan Pride Alliance (KPA) represents a departure from the practice and tradition of the Borough grant process and will be divisive in the community.

The KPA is an advocacy group seeking to advance issues in the best interest of themselves and their members. Whereas Borough-funded groups are traditionally engaged in services and activities serving the entirety of the citizens of the Borough, this group and its members are focused on advocacy and on promoting local, State and National legislation and have participated in local protests and called for boycotts of businesses. By nature, groups like the KPA, Right to Life/Pro-Abortion, NRA, BLM, etc. are advocacy groups supportive of legislation and change on a national level in line with their beliefs/goals. This is their constitutional right, but not activities squarely in line with recognized Borough powers.

In the last year the national spotlight has focused on many issues of concern to and advocated by the KPA. Those topics include: gender issues concerning participation in sports, subjects taught in schools, curriculum availability in libraries, access issues concerning public facilities such as bathrooms/locker rooms, etc.

Should the borough depart from its historical practice and begin to “pick and choose” which advocacy groups to fund, it risks implying governmental support for the goals of those groups and deprive citizens of the deliberative process to have a voice in what their community should look like. The magnitude and divisiveness of issues represented by the aforementioned groups (and others) necessitates that policy decisions affecting all citizens should only come after an abundance of public debate and consideration. Funding advocacy groups and more specifically... funding only one side, deprives the citizens of that participation.

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Funding advocacy groups in this manner raises the onus that the Borough must now provide an equal appropriation for those holding an opposing view. If a pro-abortion group is funded, then a pro-life group should be funded as well. My charge to the Assembly is that we, as an elected body, have no governmental interest in funding advocacy groups of any kind and will only divide the citizenry and turn the grant process into a partisan circus.

I am vetoing the appropriation for the Ketchikan Pride Alliance because it represents a departure from the historical practice of the Borough; it will create division where none previously existed and because it deprives citizens of the deliberative process to thoroughly debate the issues KPA advocates for.

This veto is not intended as a judgment call on the validity of the KPA or its importance to the community. I respect the right of this organization to exist and support the constitutional rights of their members in every way. Many groups in this community are not funded by local government and a failure to fund KPA should not be seen as discriminatory.

I implore the Assembly to consider this in a non-partisan manner and give careful consideration before attempting to override this veto. To do otherwise, the division I am warning of will be undeniable with the public spectacle that will follow.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rodney Dial', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rodney Dial

Mayor

Ketchikan Gateway Borough

rodneyd@kgbak.us