



Seattle Office for Civil Rights

Edward B. Murray, Mayor

Patricia Lally, Director

Under the leadership of Mayor Ed Murray, the Seattle Office for Civil Rights (SOCR) works to advance civil rights and end barriers to equity for all Seattle residents. We strive to be inclusive and mindful of the complexity and richness of identities within Seattle diverse communities. As a City department that has protected individuals' rights on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity since the late 1990's, we want to ensure that the language we use accurately reflects the communities we serve.

To that end, SOCR and Mayor Murray support the Seattle Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender (LGBT) Commission's proposal to add the word "Queer" to the Commission's name. We recognize that the word 'queer,' though once considered a pejorative term, has been reclaimed and reimagined to define sexuality, gender identity, and/or political identity.

There are many people whose identity aligns more closely today with the term 'queer' than the terms included in the LGBT Commission's current acronym. Language is not fixed, and terminology evolves as society evolves. When the LGBT Commission was first created, it was known as the Commission for Sexual Minorities. As the needs of the community changed, and the lesbian and gay movement became more inclusive of the movement for gender justice, it became necessary to focus on the transgender community. The Commission's proposal to add the word "Queer" to its name is a reflection of the evolving nature of language, and the growing diversity of our communities.

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