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## ODR and DCCPD Condemn Recent Gender Identity Discrimination

The Office of Disability Rights (ODR) takes pride in the values we embrace and stands against any form of discrimination. The District of Columbia is an inclusive city accepting of all individuals regardless of race, gender, disability, sex, age, and other diverse traits. In fact, the DC Human Rights Act makes discrimination illegal based on twenty (20) protected traits[[1]](#footnote-1) for individuals that live, visit or work in the District of Columbia, including gender identity or expression.

This past weekend, Commissioner Charlotte Clymer of the DC Commission on Persons with Disabilities was a customer in a popular restaurant, and she was denied access to the restrooms by the establishment, solely based on her gender identity. District law requires that “facility managers and personnel must respect a person’s restroom choice based on their gender identification or expression”.[[2]](#footnote-2) Furthermore, refusing access to the restroom facilities corresponding to an individual’s gender identity or expression is discrimination.

**“I am sincerely disappointed to know that certain establishments continue to have difficulties with valuing and respecting all people representing diverse backgrounds and experiences,” ODR Director Mathew McCollough expresses. “Without this core value, we will never be as strong as we should be as a community. ODR and the Commission on Persons with Disabilities condemn the discriminatory practices experienced by Commissioner Clymer and others who have faced similar forms of discrimination”.**

Since April 2014, the DC Office of Human Rights (OHR) has promoted The Safe Bathrooms DC Campaign. The Campaign seeks to make every single-stall public restroom gender-neutral in the District. While this is a District law, many businesses are not aware and require education. If a single-stall bathroom is not complying with the gender-neutral requirement, community members are encouraged to contact OHR by submitting a Non-Compliant Bathroom Complaint through the agency’s [online form process](https://dcforms.dc.gov/webform/non-compliant-bathroom-complaint), or sending a tweet to @dchumanrights using the hashtag #SafeBathroomsDC. Please contact the Office of Human Rights (202-727-4559; OHR@DC.Gov) and/or the Office of Disability Rights (202-724-5055; ODR@DC.Gov) if you witness or experience any forms of discrimination.

**About the District of Columbia Office of Disability Rights**

The mission of the DC Office of Disability Rights (ODR) is to ensure that the programs, services, benefits, activities and facilities operated or funded by the District of Columbia are fully accessible to, and useable by people with disabilities. ODR is committed to inclusion, community-based services, and self-determination for people with disabilities. ODR is responsible for overseeing the implementation of the City's obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), as well as other disability rights laws.

**About the District of Columbia Commission on Persons with Disabilities**

The Commission serves as an advisory body to inform and advise the District on programs, services, facilities, and activities that impact the lives of residents with disabilities in the District of Columbia. The Commission is committed to enhancing the image, status, inclusion, and quality of life for all District of Columbia residents, visitors, and employees with disabilities, and ensuring that they have the same rights and opportunities as those without disabilities.

1. Protected Traits in DC, District of Columbia Office of Human Rights <https://ohr.dc.gov/protectedtraits> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. District Requirements in Public Accommodations – Gender Identity and Expression – Fact Sheet, District of Columbia Office of Human Rights, <https://ohr.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ohr/publication/attachments/Gender%20Identity%20and%20Expression_Factsheet_04182017.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)