



August 13, 2019

The Hon. Mani Grewal  
Modesto City Councilmember  
manigrewalforsenate@gmail.com

Dear Councilmember Grewal,

It has come to our attention — and to the attention of others in the LGBTQ community — that you have been employing thinly veiled anti-LGBTQ attacks in your campaign for Senate District 5. Specifically, a recent video advertisement featuring Stanislaus County Sheriff Jeff Dirkse appears to highlight your opposition to SB 145 and other legislation that Equality California has sponsored to end discrimination against members of the LGBTQ community.

SB 145 and our previous criminal justice reform bills simply seek to ensure that all Californians — regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity — are treated equally under the law. We believe that people should face consequences for their actions, but there shouldn't be different sets of rules for LGBTQ people and non-LGBTQ people. To characterize your opposition to these common-sense nondiscrimination bills as "work to guarantee that adults who molest children continue to register as sex offenders" is as wrong as it is offensive.

Let me be clear: anti-LGBTQ rhetoric from you or any other candidate is unacceptable and antithetical to our California values — no matter how thinly veiled the attacks are. And we take particular exception to a candidate claiming to be "pro-equality," then using anti-LGBTQ attacks in a campaign against an openly LGBTQ candidate. On behalf of Equality California, I ask that you and your consultant Richie Ross stop attacking LGBTQ civil rights legislation and take down these offensive ads immediately.

I understand that you have sought to distinguish yourself as "the different Democrat for state senate." I sincerely hope that by "different" you don't mean "anti-LGBTQ." California voters are looking for leaders who will unite us in support of our shared values of freedom and equality, not those who would seek to divide our communities based on sexual orientation, gender identity, race or religion. There is certainly far too much hate and division coming out of the White House — we don't need it here in California. In light of your actions, we will be asking every pro-equality elected official who has endorsed you to reconsider their support of your campaign, and we will consider seeking a formal censure by the California Democratic Party if these anti-LGBTQ attacks continue. I appreciate your immediate attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Zbur".

Rick Zbur  
Executive Director

cc: Richie Ross

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