

From: Niagara Region Website <webmaster@niagararegion.ca>
Sent: Thursday, September 14, 2023 1:08 PM
To: Clerks
Subject: Online Form - Request to Speak at a Standing Committee or Regional Council

Request to Speak at a Standing Committee or Regional Council

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Name

Zoe Lachance

Address

[Redacted]

City

St. Catharines

Postal

[Redacted]

Phone

[Redacted]

Email

[Redacted]

standing committee

Regional Council

Presentation Topic

Corporate Services Committee Motion - Equity, Diversity and Inclusion and the Damaging Impacts of Hate and Intolerance CSC-C 18-2023

Presentation includes slides

No

Previously presented topic

No

Presentation Details

I would like to speak to motion CSC-C 18-2023 brought forward from the Corporate Services Committee on Wednesday September 13th, 2023. I would like to speak in favour of the motion and request that Niagara Regional Council passes this motion. I believe this motion is a crucial step in recognizing and addressing unacceptable behaviour experienced by our elected officials and representatives, as well as fellow members of our community. No person should be subject to harassment, intimidation, or bullying, let alone officials representing our community in the course of their work. Currently there is no recourse or procedures for situations of continued harassment and intimidation that are not deemed significant enough for police involvement. I believe this leaves the possibility for behaviours to continue to escalate until it becomes too late and a tragedy will inevitably occur. It also has the continued effect of intimidating members of the community who would like to engage our elected officials, attend council and committee meetings or even run for elected offices. Inaction effectively silences large swaths of the community, especially those with the most diverse voices and lived experiences who are chronically underrepresented and are often members of communities that are already targeted by hate and intolerance. It is important to recognize these barriers and mitigate them to ensure that everyone can feel safe living and being involved in the Niagara community. I believe this motion is the first step to addressing this problem, to allow information to be gathered, look at possible solutions, and take an actionable step towards a resolution that shows that hate has no home in Niagara. I have witnessed members of council and the community be on the receiving end of death threats, insults, stalking like behaviour, and other forms of harassment not only on social media but in person. It is not acceptable for anyone to have to live with these behaviours targeted towards them. Statistically speaking these behaviours are also on the rise and continued inaction towards them only perpetuates these actions further. Our policies have also not kept pace with the changes of technology and the unfettered access we have to individuals it has brought with it. It is integral Council recognizes how harassing and intimidating behaviour that technically falls outside of 'criminal conduct' and police jurisdiction or unacceptable behaviour that is not followed up on by authorities affects people as individuals, their lives and their families and there is a need to protect them and allow them to feel safe living in Niagara.

Video Consent

Yes

