



Canadian Socialist Rifle Association
101-1983 Commercial Drive, Vancouver BC V5N 4A8
CanadianSRA.ca

Official statement from the central committee of the Canadian Socialist Rifle Association

Date: February 23, 2024

Re: Anti-2SLGBTQIA+ actions in Westlock Alberta

Greetings Comrades,

We are dismayed to see the results of the vote that bans certain flags and crosswalks from being displayed on public property, including the town's only rainbow crosswalk in Westlock Alberta. The bylaw which bans crosswalks and flags supporting "political, social, or religious movements or commercial entities," in an effort to keep public spaces politically neutral won by only a narrow margin with 50.9% of voters supporting it. When it comes to the human rights of marginalized and at risk communities we do not have the luxury of being neutral or even supporting popular opinion. We must be leaders and do what's right. Even if the majority of constituents were openly homophobic and preaching hate you should not support this, and you should stand up to them.

Imagine where we would be if people remained neutral in the past. Women wouldn't have the vote, residential schools would still be stealing children from Indigenous families and black folks would still be slaves. Children with special needs would still be segregated from neurotypical children, denied an adequate education and human rights would be nonexistent for anyone who wasn't a white Christian male. 2SLGBTQIA+ folks are not a special interest group. They are human beings protected under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms, yet there are groups actively working to strip them of those rights. A Rainbow Crosswalk or flag does not promote anything. It's a powerful statement of inclusion and safety. But it also raises awareness that Queer folks still live with the threat of violence every day. No matter what, we must remember that Pride can't be cancelled by a vote. Already we are seeing an outpouring of support from across the country and if Pride flags can't be flown on public property, you can and should fly them on private property. If they won't paint a sidewalk in support of Pride, make a mural on your fence or home. Do not do it for yourself, but do it for your friends and neighbours, do it for the members of your community so they know that they are loved and welcome. Do it so they know they know they are safe with you.

"If you're not careful the newspapers will have you hating the ones who are being oppressed and siding with the oppressor."

-Malcolm X

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