

Green Party of New Brunswick Policy Proposal: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (items in GREEN exist in current policy)

Context & Issue

In 2016, the provincial government announced that they are moving forward with plans to make medically necessary gender-affirming surgeries an insured service in New Brunswick. It is also proceeding with plans to allow transgender individuals to change their birth certificates to match their gender identities. This announcement is a good step forward but we haven't seen yet a concrete work plan. The services offered to transgender individuals are very limited and often only available in the three main cities which are Moncton, Fredericton, and Saint John. Often, the social workers and the health care workers haven't been properly trained on the issue. There is evidence that access to surgeries/treatments and the ability to change personal identification documents results in decreased suicide risk for transgender individuals.¹

Discrimination against individuals who identify themselves as gay, lesbian, bisexual, intersex, queer, or transgender is real and present in our societies. Not only must services be provided to these individuals, but the government has the responsibility to reduce discrimination by educating and raising awareness of this issue among the population. Laws must be enforced when there are serious cases of discrimination and abuse. Intimidation against the individuals also needs to be denounced and penalized.

Action Plan

The Green Party is committed to identifying, denouncing and combating structural discrimination in Canadian and New Brunswick societies. The measures proposed below are aimed at putting an end to prejudice and discrimination based on age, gender identity and expression, disability, religious affiliation, political beliefs, socio-economic conditions, dress codes, marital status, family status, sexual orientation, and ethnic origin. This means that the Green Party is committed to denouncing and fighting racism, imperialism, heterosexism, cissexism, colonialism, xenophobia, capacitism, misogyny, and ageism.

A Green government would:

1. affirm the rights of all individuals to freely choose intimate partners, regardless of their sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation;
2. recognize the equal rights of persons who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, intersex, trans-sexual, queer, or transgender to housing, jobs, civil marriage, medical benefits, child custody, and in all areas of life including equal tax treatment;
3. ensure that gender-affirming services are available in the individuals' official language of choice regardless of location, and that the rights of intersex individuals are protected

¹ Greta R. Bauer, Ayden I. Scheim, Jake Pyne, Robb Travers, and Rebecca Hammond. 2015. *Intervenable factors associated with suicide risk in transgender persons: a respondent driven sampling study in Ontario, Canada*. BMC Public Health 15: 525. Accessed on February 25, 2018 at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4450977/>

and discrimination based on gender identity characteristics, and expression as well as on sex, gender, or sexual orientation is prohibited,

4. affirm the right of all persons to self-determination with regard to gender identity and sex and therefore support the right of intersex and transgender individuals to be free from coercion and involuntary assignment of gender or sex. A Green government would further affirm the right of access to medical and surgical treatment for assignment or reassignment of gender or sex, based on informed consent;
5. pursue legislation against all forms of hate crimes, including those directed against people who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, transgender, and intersex. Offenders will be obliged to pay compensation to the LGBTIQ people who have suffered violence and injustice;
6. end security surveillance and covert infiltration of organizations that promote equal rights on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity;
7. provide an education and awareness program in schools to inform children and teenagers about sexual orientation and gender identity.