

I would like the following statement to be read into the public meeting records in its entirety. I will provide township officials a copy of it via email upon request and via printed hard copy now.

Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I want to personally thank Erica Batdorf and Tammy Swavely for meeting with me earlier in June of this year to help me navigate the process of coming before you tonight. So the public is aware, I first presented the idea of an anti-discrimination ordinance to township staff at the beginning of the summer. Thank you to the BOS for adding me to the agenda this evening.

My name is Christopher Carroll, I have been a West Vincent Township resident for the majority of my life. My family moved here in 1973 and in 1999, my wife and I relocated back when we purchased our house. I previously served on the West Vincent Township Environmental Advisory Committee for 7 years.

Although we are all at least partially protected from discrimination and human/civil rights violations at the Federal and State Levels, certain aspects of our lives are not free from legal discrimination.

Currently, at the State and Federal levels, we are protected from legal discrimination based upon age, sex, race, creed and religion, skin color, national origin or ancestry, physical or mental disability, veteran status, citizenship, familial status, and genetic information. Pennsylvania adds protection to those with a G.E.D. versus high school diploma, use of a service animal, and our relationships with the disabled.

The following are currently NOT considered protected classes at the State and Federal levels, meaning that the local municipalities must enact ordinances to provide protection:

Sexual orientation
Gender Identity
Marital Status

For example, unless we codify an anti-discrimination ordinance, a LGBTQ+ person can legally refuse to provide services and housing to straight people. And vice versa. A landlord can refuse to rent to a married couple. And vice versa. A transgendered individual can refuse services to a cis gendered person. And vice versa.

Although reports of discrimination in the Township are purely anecdotal at this point, it would be best if we follow the lead of communities like Kennett Square, Phoenixville, West Chester, and Philadelphia and adopt an anti-discrimination ordinance now versus waiting until there's an actual problem that needs to be resolved.

I propose that the BOS adopt an ordinance with the same intent and effect as Phoenixville's.

This will grant no one any special rights. It will ensure that there are legal remedies available when any one of us, straight, bisexual, or gay, transgendered or cisgendered, and married and unmarried face discrimination.

If anyone would like to read the Phoenixville anti-discrimination ordinance, I can be found online at <http://www.phoenixville.org/uploaded/PDFs/Public%20Notices/Ordinances/2017New%20Folder/Ordinance%20-%20Antidiscrimination.pdf>

Thank you for your time.