

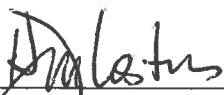
Statement of Support

The City of Valparaiso is a fine place to live for most of its residents, for most of the time. The community has much to offer, but like most cities, it is always striving to do better. In June 2011, the Valparaiso Common Council passed an Ordinance providing that it is the "public policy of the City of Valparaiso to provide all of its citizens with equal opportunity to achieve their goals and ambitions and in so doing remove barriers to equal opportunity created by both intentional and unintentional actions based upon stereotypes rather than individual merit." This Ordinance established an Advisory Human Relations Council to provide counsel and assistance to the Mayor "on matters related to discrimination, including harassment, based on characteristics such as race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation and socioeconomic status."

The Ordinance reflects the belief that diversity benefits the community and should be celebrated. However, the inappropriate words and actions of a few people in our community cause some of our residents and visitors to feel that they are not welcome.

We sign this statement because we believe no one should be made to feel unwelcome in Valparaiso because of the characteristics identified in the Ordinance. It takes only a few people, through their actions and words, to make others feel unwelcome and cause fear and isolation. We want to express our firm belief that those few do not represent the sentiment of the majority of the residents, businesses, schools and civic organizations in the community.

In short, we welcome all people to Valparaiso because we believe your presence enhances the community. We urge all sectors of our community to make a concerted effort to make all citizens and visitors feel welcome and valued in the City.



Mayor, City of Valparaiso



Chancellor, Ivy Tech Comm. College







Jim M. Doane



Members, Valparaiso Human Relations Council



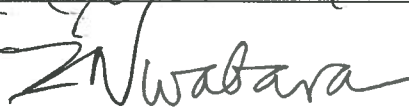
President, Valparaiso University



Superintendent, Valpo Comm. Schools







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