



David Morris
Board Chair

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City of Toronto
100 Queen Street West
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Dear: Chair Councillor Michael Thompson and Members of the Economic Development Committee

Item ED21.5, 2017 Major Cultural Organizations Allocations, Economic Development Committee, May 8, 2017

I am writing today on behalf of the Board of Management of The 519, as a leading service provider for the LGBTQ2S community, an innovative space for change and inclusion, and a proud Agency of the City of Toronto that provides community programs, education and training services, and equitable accessible space for thousands of LGBTQ2S people from Toronto and beyond.

At our April 24, 2017 Board of Management meeting, our Board voted unanimously to call on all members of the Economic Development Committee and Council to continue to support the Pride Toronto Festival through full funding and in-kind services.

The Pride Toronto Festival is an event of both global and local significance and at a time when other countries are engaged in the persecution, torture and extermination of LGBTQ2S peoples, it is more important than ever that Toronto continues to be seen as a world leader in supporting LGBTQ2S people and human rights.

Our public dialogue must shift from who's in and who's out of the parade towards a more constructive conversation that centres the experiences of racialized and marginalized LGBTQ2S communities into our shared understanding of who makes up the LGBTQ2S community as we work collectively to advance inclusion for all.

The 519 offers it full support to work in partnership with Pride Toronto, the Toronto Police Service and our sister LGBTQ2S organizations to engage in a meaningful conversation to find a long-term sustainable solution that ensures our Pride parade, events, and year-round work reflects the principles of social and racial justice and acknowledges the lived experience of all members of the LGBTQ2S community.

Sincerely,

David Morris

CC: The 519 Board of Management