



A LEADING AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WITH INTERNATIONAL REACH  
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

October 14, 2014

The Honorable Ron Payne  
Mayor  
City of Owensboro  
Owensboro City Hall  
101 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Owensboro, KY 42303

Dear Ron:

I would normally not engage myself in Owensboro city government matters, but since WKU-O plays a large role in Owensboro's economy and quality of life, and since city policies sometimes affect our Owensboro students, faculty, and staff, I am offering my thoughts on the current deliberation about an Owensboro Fairness Ordinance. Seven Kentucky cities have passed local Fairness Ordinances including Louisville, Lexington, Covington, Vicco, Frankfort, Morehead, and Danville. It is my understanding that Berea and Murray are close to passing their own ordinances as well. This statewide movement is under way. It is my belief that both Bowling Green and Owensboro need to join this parade and ensure that all of our local populations, including our LGBTQ citizens, are protected as they pursue the highest possible quality of life throughout our community. It appears both Bowling Green and Owensboro are the largest cities in Kentucky without fairness protections for our citizens.

A Fairness Ordinance is not only important for Owensboro, but is also important for us at WKU-O. LGBTQ fairness is growing across Kentucky particularly in communities where public universities are housed. This is important for us at WKU-O as we seek to be a campus community which embraces all gender identity dimensions. We want to ensure that all students, faculty, and staff are embraced and welcome. Equally important is the value such embracement brings to the recruitment of talented students, faculty, and staff to Owensboro. We want to be sure that our campus and our broader community offer attractive, competitive living environments for richly diverse populations who add value to our campus and the broader community.

I would be pleased to personally respond to the City Commission should a personal dialogue be helpful. I would be grateful if you could share this communication with your City Commission in hopes that a Fairness Ordinance can be thoughtfully

*The Spirit Makes the Master*

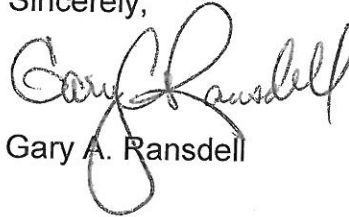
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addressed. Thank you for your consideration. Let me know if I can provide further input or insight.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Gary A. Ransdell".

Gary A. Ransdell

GAR:sh

Attachment

xc: Mr. David Porter, Chair, WKU Board of Regents  
Dr. Dennis George, Dean, University College  
Dr. Gene Tice, Regional Chancellor, WKU-O  
Ms. Janet Taylor, President, WKU Student Government  
✓ Dr. Margaret Crowder, Chair, WKU University Senate  
Ms. Tanya Vincent, Chair, Staff Council  
Ms. Dora James, Regional Organizer—Western Kentucky, Fairness Campaign