



MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEMOCRATIC PARTY

July 25, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LGBTQ+ Activists Call for Resignation of “Slate of Hate” Councilmember Travis Holleman as he doubles down on harmful rhetoric

Clarksville, TN – On Thursday, July 25, 2024, members and activists from the LGBTQ+ Community filled Clarksville’s City Council Chamber, demanding the resignation of Councilmember Travis Holleman over remarks made against LGBTQ+ people, the city’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer, and efforts to increase diversity in the city government workforce.

“As Chair of the Montgomery County Democratic Party, I call on Travis Holleman to resign his seat immediately. For the failure of his leadership, for the harm done to the LGBTQ+ community, but also to all the folks that are lifted up by diversity, equity, and inclusion programs. DEI isn’t just LGBTQ+ folks. It’s about Juneteenth. It’s about Emancipation Day. It’s about the AAPI Festival. It’s about Latino heritage. Clarksville is a beautiful city because it’s diverse, not despite its diversity, and that’s an American concept.” - Charles Uffelman [You can see Uffelman’s full remarks here.](#)

“He [Holleman] directed the community overall not to support us, going so far to insist that we pose a threat to the people of Clarksville, ultimately stating that we are not welcome here.” Hart’s voice shook as she asserted, “If we’re going to see change, we must quit tolerating hate speech and blatant discrimination... We in the community condemn this. These are dangerous discriminatory words that actually put people’s lives in danger, and he was allowed to speak them here.” [Hart’s full remarks are here.](#)

Student Nick Wojack told their journey as a young queer kid and the importance of Pride events helping members of the LGBTQ+ community make friends and build support networks. “Mr. Holleman, Pride is a place where we are free to get to know others without the inclination to worry about what they think.” Wojack shared their journey of gender identity, adding, “So today, I stand here as a testament that people like me exist. That however the world may perceive us, it might not always be true to our heart. In the end, Mr. Holleman, I ask you to come and understand us and the different stories we have to tell.” [Wojack’s remarks are linked here.](#)

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Notably, only two other council members had anything to add regarding Holleman's comments. Wanda Allen of Ward 8 commented through tears, "There should not be this much hate in our world." Allen went on to discuss the recent use of "DEI" in the media, and how DEI initiatives are important. "The whole DEI thing in our country is ridiculous. It means diversity, equity, and inclusion. You cannot represent your community with those types of feelings and truly, truly represent everybody that you are meant to represent." [Remarks from Allen.](#)

Councilmember Holleman appeared to be unmoved by his constituents' statements, saying that "DEI is a new concept." National DEI initiatives began in 1961. He added, "I never really cared about LGBT until they started targeting children." This was met with vocal dissension from the meeting attendees. Holleman doubled down on his ignorant rhetoric, referencing a recent law passed in California prohibiting teachers from disclosing a child's newly discovered gender identity to their parents. "Like, wake up. Please. My whole objective is to protect children." Holleman did not articulate exactly how children were being targeted, or any other evidence to support this statement. [Remarks from Holleman.](#)

Karen Reynolds of Ward 9 noted, "Yes, there is freedom of speech. But there are also consequences to what you say. This is what democracy looks like." Reynolds was the sole member of the council to speak out against Holleman's remarks at the previous meeting. [Remarks from Reynolds.](#)

The full text of Resolution No. 4, delivered to the Council, is available for download and viewing as a signed [PDF here](#) or by visiting our [website](#).

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About Montgomery County Democratic Party: The Montgomery County Democratic Party is dedicated to advancing progressive values and ensuring equal opportunity for all residents of Montgomery County, Tennessee.

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