**Virginia Beach Human Rights Commission Member Dehumanizes LGBTQ+ Community**

**Norfolk, VA** – Kenrick El, a member of the Virginia Beach Human Rights Commission (VBHRC), made comments on his Facebook page calling the LGBTQ+ community an “abomination,” saying homosexuals suffer from “mental illness,” and denied the existence of the transgender community while reinforcing inaccurate, outdated stereotypes.

**Disregard and contempt for the dignity of any human is counter to the mission of VBHRC, and LGBT Life Center does not believe the commission, or the commissioner, can legitimately claim to respect and safeguard all Virginia Beach citizens when a vulnerable minority population is declared to be mentally ill, an abomination, and subjected to prejudicial stereotypes.**

**Kenrick El’s statements do not promote “mutual understanding and respect among citizens, and the fulfillment of human rights,” as the commission is entrusted and sanctioned to do.**

**Therefore, we are calling on the commission to remove Kenrick El from VBHRC. We believe this is the most appropriate method to restore faith and legitimacy to the commission, and is a reasonable response to the defamatory comments of commissioner Kenrick El.**

**DIVERSITY TRAINING:**

**LGBT Life Center offers diversity training (also known as sensitivity training) to private and public organizations. Participants are guided through an inclusive and culturally competent session to** help organizations create and maintain a welcoming, safe and supportive environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) community members.

For more information, please contact us at 757-640-0929 or at lgbtlifecenter.org.

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**ABOUT LGBT LIFE CENTER**: LGBT Life Center was formerly known as CANDII House, Full Circle CANDII, and ACCESS AIDS Care/LGBT Center of Hampton Roads until June of 2017 when it expanded its mission and rebranded as LGBT Life Center. For 30 Years, LGBT Life Center has been a trusted leader that empowers the LGBTQ communities and all people affected by HIV through improving health and wellness, strengthening families and communities and providing transformative education and advocacy.