

[via email; hardcopy to follow]

February 10, 2014

Honourable John Baird, Minister of Foreign Affairs
Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada
125 Sussex Drive Ottawa ON K1A 0G2 Canada

RE: accessing Canadian passports for trans-identified Canadians

Honourable John Baird, Minister of Foreign Affairs:

The Trans Equality Society of Alberta (TESA) applauds the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs for taking a public stand supporting human rights and decrying discrimination against LGBT people regarding the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia.

In the spirit of the support the Honourable Minister so rightly shows for LGBT persons in Sochi, TESA requests that the Honourable Minister review and abolish the practises undertaken by Passport Canada--a special operating agency under the aegis of the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs--in its interactions with trans-identified Canadians seeking a Canadian passport. TESA's position is that Passport Canada's current practises neither respect trans-identified Canadians' human nor Charter rights as citizens of Canada.

A number of TESA's members have consistently encountered challenges in obtaining Canadian passports, including:

1. A requirement to provide a letter from a medical specialist disclosing personal medical information to Passport Canada regarding diagnosis and treatment for Gender Identity Disorder.
2. A requirement to sign a Passport Canada waiver (form PPT 152 titled *Request for a Canadian Passport Indicating a Sex Other Than the Sex Shown on My Documentary Evidence of Citizenship*) or be refused processing of Canadian passport applications. [Note: access to Consular services are implicitly waived by signing PPT 152]
3. Successful applicants receiving a limited-term, non-renewable Canadian passport.
4. Successful applicants being unable to serve as a passport guarantor for other Canadian citizens due to the limited-term Canadian passport so issued.
5. Applications for the limited-term Canadian passport are charged at full-term price, with no discount respective to the term limitation, nor any waiver of Consular fees. [cf. PPT 152 waiver]

TESA appreciates your prompt action addressing these concerns, supporting equal rights for LGBT citizens governed by your Ministry within Canada.

Regards,
TRANS EQUALITY SOCIETY of ALBERTA
[signed]

Jan Buterman, President