

No Pride in Policing Coalition says Vote NO to Police in Pride
Pride Toronto Must be Accountable and Transparent to LGBTQBIPOC Communities

Toronto: The No Pride in Policing Coalition (NPPC) is calling for political accountability and transparency from Pride Toronto and advising members to vote NO in a vote on police participation in Toronto's Pride festivities, taking place Tuesday January 22, 2019. The Special General Meeting to be held online as well as at Ryerson University* is a result of a member petition requiring Pride Toronto to be accountable to its membership.

NPPC is a broad group of LGBTQ Torontonians. The coalition opposes Executive Director Olivia Nuamah's position that Toronto Police Services be allowed to participate in the Toronto Pride Parade and Festival. Pride Toronto's position defies loud opposition and protests against Toronto Police Service (TPS) participation by many in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, transgender, queer, Black, Indigenous, people of colour (LGBTQBIPOC) communities

The NPPC coalition is alarmed at Pride Toronto's communication to members saying their decision to invite Police back into Pride was the result of financial pressures. Academic and activist Gary Kinsman points out that "there is no reason to believe there is a link between police presence and pride finances, but more importantly, finances are not an excuse for ignoring the position of Pride's membership".

"For Two years running Pride's membership has voted overwhelmingly against institutional Police participation in Pride" said Nick Mulé of Queer Ontario. "The Executive Director's decision was a flagrant refusal to be accountable to Pride Toronto's membership".

"It is well known and documented that Toronto Police have a very bad track record with Black, Indigenous, racialized and LGBTQ communities" added Rinaldo Walcott, Black academic and LGBTQ activist "Pride is not a Tourism Toronto event – it is our time to come together, celebrate our incredible resistance and speak truth to power – not capitulate to it. If the leadership of Pride Toronto can't listen to their own community they should resign" he added.

The No Pride in Policing Coalition says Pride Toronto should act based on community accountability not pressure from funders. According to Kinsman "Pride Toronto is telling us they are selling out their membership for money – this shows they are clearly not prioritizing accountability to member decisions or the real interests of our community."

The Coalition has concerns about the January 22nd Special Membership Meeting on police participation. “Not only is the resolution badly worded, they are using online voting - this means the results will be hard to verify” said Mulé.

The No Pride in Policing Coalition (NPPC) is a coalition of individuals and community organizations that are united in calling for no organized and institutional Toronto Police Services – and other police forces – presence within Pride Toronto parades, marches and street fairs. This includes no police contingents, floats, booths, and uniformed or armed officers. The NPPC supports all the demands raised by Black Lives Matter – Toronto in 2016 at the Pride Toronto Parade.

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*The Pride Toronto Special General Meeting (SGM) will be held on Tuesday 22nd January 2019 at Ryerson University, 31 Gerrard Street East, POD 250. This is an accessible entrance and signs will be posted directing you to the meeting room. Doors open at 5:30pm and we will begin at 6:30pm.