



Member of the European Parliament

**Loreta Graužiniė**

*Speaker of the Seimas*

**Members of the Seimas**

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**Re: Reject bill targeting LGBTI people**

Brussels, 11 November 2015

Honourable Speaker,

Honourable Members of the Seimas,

We are writing to express our grave concern about a legislative proposal presently considered in the Seimas. It concerns a proposed amendment to the Code of Administrative Violations (Bill XIP-4490(3)), which discriminates against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people. The final vote is scheduled to take place tomorrow.

As fellow law-makers and fellow Europeans, we urge you to reject this bill.

According to the bill, carrying out public speeches, demonstrating goods, posters, slogans and audio-visual materials, as well as organizing public events, which "denigrate" "constitutional family values", would be made punishable with an administrative fine ranging from €300 to €900. In case of a repeated violation this may be increased to €1800.

We wish to emphasize that this is an unacceptable breach of fundamental rights, and stands at odds with European values of freedom, non-discrimination and equality as enshrined in Article 2 TEU, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and Lithuania's obligations under European and International law.

Not only does the bill infringe Lithuanian citizens' right to freedom of peaceful assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression and freedom of media particularly in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity, we also worry that it poses a serious threat to Lithuanian citizens' freedom to receive and impart information and ideas without interference by public authority (Articles 10 & 11

**The European Parliament's Intergroup on LGBTI Rights**

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ECHR). Furthermore, for its discriminatory content against LGBTI people, the bill violates Lithuania's obligation to prohibit discrimination as enshrined in Article 2 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Article 14 of ECHR and Article 21 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Back in 2013 the Council of Europe's Venice Commission has already clearly stated that statutory provisions prohibiting so-called 'homosexual propaganda' are incompatible with the European Convention on Human Rights and international human rights standards.

We hope the Seimas will look into the above issues as a matter of priority and adopt all necessary measures in order to respect and uphold fundamental rights, including the right to non-discrimination, the right to information as well as the right to freedom of assembly and association.

Yours sincerely,

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*Greens/EFA*

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*ALDE*

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