



April 17, 2024 - To all the residents of Thunder Bay,

Diversity Thunder Bay and all of our partners, members and friends listed below, request your support in urgently addressing an upcoming event in our city.

A Canadian comedy troupe that has been profiled by the Canadian Anti-Hate Network for their ties to White Nationalism and for their anti-Semitic, transphobic, homophobic and misogynistic content* is scheduled to perform in Thunder Bay on May 3rd & 4th at a local venue. Their act has also included offensive material referring to residential schools and unmarked graves. Most recently they were selling a t-shirt depicting a crude caricature of serial killer Robert Pickton, murderer of dozens of women, many of whom were Indigenous. **

While there are some that would defend this type of “shock humour” under the guise of freedom of speech, we ask you to consider this statement from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Volker Türk, “***Human rights law is clear – freedom of expression stops at hatred that incites discrimination, hostility or violence.***” ***

Diversity Thunder Bay believes that an event such as this will greatly hinder reconciliation and cause harm in our city by inflaming and reinforcing anti-Indigenous racism and by impacting the sense of belonging and even the safety of Indigenous people. Normalizing this type of humour only serves to perpetuate the dehumanization of Indigenous people and the violence towards them.

Due to our grave concern over its potential negative impacts, we are calling for the immediate cancellation of these shows.

Thunder Bay will only move forward with reconciliation through concerted collective action. We must all stand up together against racism, discrimination and hate in all its forms to make Thunder Bay a welcoming and safe place for all.



Thank you for your consideration,

Diversity Thunder Bay Executive - Walid Chahal, Ellen Chambers, Brenda Reimer, Anna Torontow, Andrei Rosario, Maneet Ahlawat, Carol Rusak, Mustafa Mohammad

1. Councillor Dominic Pasqualino - Northwood Ward Thunder Bay City Councillor
2. *Councillor Kasey Ereni – Councillor at Large Thunder Bay City Council
3. Elizabeth Fry Society of Northwestern Ontario
4. Emily Shandruk - Emily Shandruk Solutions
5. *Independent Living Resource Centre Thunder Bay
6. Lise Vaugeois - MPP Thunder Bay-Superior North
7. Mayor Mark Thibert and Council of the Municipality of Neebing
8. Rainbow Collective
9. Sandi Boucher - Indigenous Speaker/Activist/Author
10. Sol Mamakwa - MPP Kiiwetinoong
11. Thunder Bay and District Labour Council
12. Thunder Bay Museum
13. Thunder Bay Public Library
14. Thunder Pride

15. Claire Verney - Community Member
16. *Christine Singleton CD Sgt (Rtd) – Community Member
17. Cynthia Nault - Community Member
18. Dr. Margaret Woods - Community Member
19. Elizabeth Pim - Community Member
20. *Evelina Pan -Community Member
21. *Indigo Smith - Community Member
22. Jason Veltri - Community Member
23. John K. Stephenson - Community Member
24. *Keith Sato - Community Member
25. *Katherine McColl - Community Member
26. *Marianne Jones - Community Member
27. *Matthew Diegel - Community Member
28. *Megan J. Net- Community Member
29. Michelle Landry - Community Member
30. Oliver Reimer - Community Member
31. *Paul Pugh - Community Member
32. *Richard Hughes - Community Member
33. Sandra Goodick - Community Member
34. *Tammy Graham – Community Member

****Updated signatories on April 21, 2024***



**You may show your support by sharing this letter or by adding your name to it. To do so or for further inquiries, please email:
DiversityThunderBay@gmail.com**

References:

*https://www.antihate.ca/stops_on_comedy_troupe_involved_with_white_nationalist_network_canada_wide_tour_canceled

**<https://globalnews.ca/news/10322134/pickton-shirt-comedy-show-cancelled/>

**<https://globalnews.ca/news/10316701/disturbing-t-shirt-robert-pickton/>

***<https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements/2023/01/freedom-speech-not-freedom-spread-racial-hatred-social-media-un-experts#:~:text=As%20he%20underlined%20Human%20rights,creates%20major%20fissures%20in%20societies.>