

# viewpoint

## OPINIONS PAGE BLOG

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# Here are council member positions on the HRO



**Ron Littlepage**  
times-union columnist

With the City Council set to vote Tuesday on legislation that would expand the city's Human Rights Ordinance, it's a good time to review what council members said when they were running for office in 2015.

Questionnaires sent to candidates by the Times-Union editorial page included this: "Do you think gays should be included among the groups covered in the city's Human Rights Ordinance?"

Three current council members — Danny Becton, Bill Gulliford and Lori Boyer — didn't get the questionnaires because they didn't face opposition.

The remaining 16 council members responded. Here are their answers:

**Katrina Brown:** "Yes. I believe no person or group should be excluded or discriminated and all citizens shall be protective class."

**Reggie Gaffney:** "I believe in equality for everyone. The Florida judicial system is currently addressing this issue and I will abide by the law."

**Doyle Carter:** "No."

**Jim Love:** "Yes, I do. It is the right thing to do both morally and economi-

cally. I don't believe any business leader (Tim Cook of Apple for instance) in the LGBT community will move a business to Jacksonville until we have this Human Rights Ordinance in place."

**John Crescimbeni:** "I do not tolerate discrimination, regardless of its intended targets. In 2012, although I did not support legislation introduced (on this subject) as it was written, I did support a proposed substitute."

"The proposed substitute modified the original bill by restoring all references to the U.S. Constitution, struck entirely any reference to 'sexual identity' or 'sexual expression' throughout the ordinance, exempted religious organizations from the provisions therein and limited the extent to which a claim could be pursued before the Jacksonville Human Rights Commission."

**Tommy Hazouri:** "Yes."

**Greg Anderson:** "I believe that Jacksonville should be a community that encourages fair treatment and equal opportunity for all persons. HRO should reflect this aspiration while also protecting our businesses, community and religious organizations."

**Sam Newby:** "As a conservative who believes strongly in upholding our Constitution, I am an advocate for endorsing

it and protecting our civil liberties. Under my leadership, there will be zero tolerance for discrimination."

**Reggie Brown:** "I believe no person or group should be excluded or discriminated against and all citizens shall be a protected class."

**Anna Lopez Brosche:** "No one should be a victim of any form of discrimination and all citizens should receive fair and equal treatment, and our laws should extend such protections. As a member of the City Council, I will always have an open door policy and will listen to concerns from small businesses and religious institutions if, in fact, legitimate legal issues arise from any proposed city ordinance."

**Joyce Morgan:** "Every citizen should be afforded the same rights under the law."

**Scott Wilson:** "I don't believe anyone should be discriminated against for any reason. Jacksonville is a unique city, there should be a unique way to address this issue."

**Garrett Dennis:** "I am against discrimination on any human being. Jacksonville needs to take a stand on discrimination NOW."

**Al Ferraro:** "I think all people are created equal and should have equal opportunities and rights."

**Aaron Bowman:** "Yes."

**Matt Schellenberg:** "I believe that everyone, despite ethnicity or religious background should be able to live their lives, and practice their beliefs, without discrimination from others."

"I do not, however, believe that government should single out a small portion of the population for special protections, including criminal punishments for offenders, especially as I have yet to see the proof that wide-ranging discrimination against the LGBT community exists."

"We are all one people, and putting each group in a different box only works to further divide us and provide a basis for unnecessary litigation. A bill that includes every single person in the city would have my vote."

It's clear from the answers that most of the council members who responded to the questionnaires say they are against discrimination in any form.

If they meant what they said when they campaigned, then they should vote to expand the HRO because, bottom line, what the opponents are arguing for is the right to discriminate against the LGBT community.

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## Trump is right to chastise judges who overreach



**Patrick Buchanan**  
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"Disheartening and demoralizing," wailed Judge Neil Gorsuch of President Donald Trump's comments about the judges seeking to overturn his 90-day ban on travel to the U.S. from the Greater Middle East war zones.

What a wimp. Just what horrible thing had our president said?

A "so-called judge" blocked the travel ban, said Trump.

And the arguments in court, where 9th Circuit appellate judges were hearing the government's appeal, were "disgraceful."

And that a "bad student in high school would have understood the arguments better."

Did the president disparage a couple of judges?

Yep. Compare his remarks to the tweeted screeds of Elizabeth Warren after her Senate colleague, Jeff Sessions, was confirmed as attorney general.

Sessions, said Warren, represents "radical hatred." And if he makes "the tiniest attempt to bring his racism, sexism & bigotry" into the Department of Justice, "all of us" will pile on.

Now this is hate speech. For how do you sit down and work alongside people you believe to be crypto-Nazis, Klansmen and fascists? Apparently, you don't.

### CLIP THE COURT'S WINGS

Rather, you vilify them. Riot against them. Deny them the right to speak or to be heard.

And such conduct is becoming common on campuses today.

As for Trump's disparagement of the judges, only someone ignorant of history can view that as frightening.

Thomas Jefferson refused to enforce the Alien & Sedition Acts of President John Adams.

His party impeached Supreme Court Justice Samuel Chase, who had presided over one of the trials.

Andrew Jackson defied Chief Justice John Marshall's prohibition against moving the Cherokees out of Georgia.

President Franklin Roosevelt proposed adding six justices to emasculate a Supreme Court of the "nine old men" he reviled for having declared some New Deal schemes unconstitutional.

President Dwight Eisenhower called his Supreme Court choices Earl Warren and William Brennan two of the "worst mistakes" he made as president.

Whether the rollout of the president's temporary travel ban was ill-prepared or not, the president's authority in the matter of protecting the borders and keeping out those he sees as potentially dangerous is universally accepted. That a district judge would overrule the president on a matter of border security in wartime is absurd.

Consider the fact that secularist justices have:

- De-Christianized our country.
- Invented new rights for vicious criminals.
- Torn our country apart with idiotic busing orders to achieve racial balance in public schools.
- Turned over centuries of tradition and hundreds of state, local and federal laws to discover that the rights to an abortion and same-sex marriage were there in Madison's Constitution.

A clipping of the court's wings is long overdue.

## Another view: David Fitzsimmons Arizona Daily Star



## Fear over Super Bowl ad reveals a wimpy country



**Ruben Navarrette**  
washington post writers

I'm proud to be an American. But there are days when my countrymen don't make it easy. We've become a nation of wimps. These days, everything scares us.

We're even afraid of Super Bowl commercials. The Fox network was too scared of what would happen if it aired the full and uncut version of a beautiful ad from 84 Lumber about a mother and daughter taking a special trip.

Braving the elements, the two of them arrive at the U.S.-Mexico border only to find that the welcome mat has been removed.

Or has it? There's an imposing wall, but there's also an impressive door.

The commercial is a masterpiece that manages to humanize immigrants at a time when too many people want to demonize them.

Yet the corporate suits at Fox decided that viewers weren't mature enough to handle this material. After all, the topic of immigration scares the whole country. Always has.

There's a paradox: Who do you think is cleaning up in the kitchen while we're watching the game?

What exactly was Fox trying to protect us from? Reality?

In the end, the network ran a shorter and safer version of the ad that wasn't as good as the original because it chopped off the best part: the ending. Meanwhile, the company directed viewers online to see the entire commercial. So many people visited the website that it crashed.

That's when the fear spread to the public relations folks at 84 Lumber, who spent the evening doing damage control.

On social media, the corporate flaks insisted that the company "does not condone illegal immigration."

One tweet even described the ad as a "symbolic celebration of a journey that ends with becoming legal U.S. citizens."

*We have become a nation of wimps who are afraid to discuss immigration in a rational way.*

Sure, the mother and daughter's journey could end that way. Of course, it could also end with them being scooped up by the Border Patrol and sent back to their village in Mexico.

And now that more people have seen the full version of the ad, it's the company's turn to be afraid of pushback, harassing phone calls, hate mail, talk radio tantrums, maybe even a boycott by those who want a closed border to match their state of mind. All things that make corporate folks nervous.

In a statement to The Wall Street Journal, 84 Lumber's president and owner, Maggie Hardy Magerko, said: "Even President Trump has said there should be a 'big beautiful door in the wall so that people can come into this country legally.' It's not about the wall. It's about the door in the wall. If people are willing to work hard and make this country better, that door should be open to them."

Don't tell me. Tell Trump, who recently let the cat out of the bag when he talked about reforming the visa and green card programs to protect U.S. workers.

In an attempt to please both nationalists on the right and unionists on the left, he is going after legal immigrants.

After all, who do these people from India, China, Mexico and a host of other countries think they are anyway?

How dare they inconvenience American laborers by making them get up earlier, move faster, work harder and log more hours?

So on Nov. 8, in desperation, we hired a protector to look out for our interests. His name is Donald Trump.

For that error in judgment, and for letting our fear get the better of us, we ought to be ashamed.

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## James Baldwin still speaks to today's realities



**Leonard Pitts Jr.**  
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Death has this way of making truth-tellers seem harmless. Alive, Martin Luther King Jr. provoked a president and divided a nation with his truth. Dead, he is an image on a commemorative

place mat, his words safe enough for recitation by children.

This also holds, to a lesser degree, for Malcolm X and Medgar Evers. Dead, they were no longer dangerous.

"We took out all the radicality of their legacy," says Raoul Peck.

Peck is the director of "I Am Not Your Negro," a documentary built on 30 pages of notes that James Baldwin wrote for a book he never finished, a meditation on race, America and his three murdered friends: Medgar, Malcolm and Martin.

The film is a melange of arresting images, film clips and music framing Baldwin's lacerating words as heard in archival footage and in readings by Samuel L. Jackson.

It is a masterpiece, deserving its rave reviews and Oscar nomination. And it demands to be seen more than once.

But what is most stunning about "Negro" is its prescience and what its prescience says about what America today. Here are the words of a man who died in 1987, and yet those words somehow contain Trayvon Martin, the Ferguson uprising, the election of Donald Trump and all the other broken promises.

"People finally say to you," says Baldwin through Jackson, "in an attempt to dismiss the social reality: 'But you're so bitter.' Well, I may or may not be bitter. But if I were, I would have good reasons for it, chief among them that American blindness or cowardice which allows us to pretend that life presents no reasons for being bitter."

As he speaks, you are watching a kneeling Rodney King get kicked in the back of the head by an L.A. cop.

And you might, if you are African-American, want to shout hallelujah at hearing those who blithely chastise your "anger" so elegantly rebuked.

You might, if you are African-American, want to bow your head and lift a hand to the ceiling because you have wondered, too, but did not have the words to say.

"When the Israelis pick up guns," says Baldwin, "or the Poles or the Irish or any white man in the world says 'Give me liberty or give me death,' the entire white world applauds. When a black man says exactly the same thing, word for word, he is judged a criminal and treated like one and everything possible is done to make an example of this bad (n word) so there won't be any more like him."

And you might, if you are African-American, just want to say, "Amen."

"The scariest thing," says Peck, "is that it is so precise and dead on the point of what is happening right now. ... We have been somehow in a sort of lethargy. We've been sleeping, and we've been lazy. We've got Black History Month and we have Martin Luther King Day and we have new laws, et cetera, and we pretend as if everything is OK now. Which it's not. We've just buried the corpse even deeper."

More than a work of unparalleled brilliance, it is an urgent reminder that when it comes to race and America, the truth is not "safe."

And it never was.

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