**Liaison Team Report for the week of 21st January 2019**

Ok, I know it looks ominous, but, if you haven’t seen the You-Tube video of Brenda’s speech at the Women’s Rally, well, take the risk!

[**https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DE\_dMivGfE94%26fbclid%3DIwAR0KqelyUFbVC4SunFHRxUN14VXRwhtYNFp0NRlUwJJGVA2a0wzpXAHRpkk&data=02%7C01%7C%7C3f733793a9e044ba6c6f08d683aeca01%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C636841184064036602&sdata=T8izNZ1rzDaebgNF9tLZ9dVukjRQ30TsQJdJhRsFMco%3D&reserved=0**](https://nam02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DE_dMivGfE94%26fbclid%3DIwAR0KqelyUFbVC4SunFHRxUN14VXRwhtYNFp0NRlUwJJGVA2a0wzpXAHRpkk&data=02%7C01%7C%7C3f733793a9e044ba6c6f08d683aeca01%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C636841184064036602&sdata=T8izNZ1rzDaebgNF9tLZ9dVukjRQ30TsQJdJhRsFMco%3D&reserved=0)

**Monday January 21**: Martin Luther King Day

 Brenda and Astrid participate the Ethnic Studies Coalition Conference Call.

**Tuesday January 22**: At Statehouse: Brenda Churchill

Brenda: H3 Ethnic studies bill: House Education: In Committee room to hear testimony.

Brenda Churchill and Astrid Salvanas: Conference call with Ethnic Coalition regarding H.3.

**Wednesday January 23**: At Statehouse: Brenda Churchill and Jesse Scarlato

Keith Goslant at Statehouse for evening event.

Brenda: House Education committee: Provided testimony on behalf of Alliance in favor of H3. Written testimony already submitted by Keith Goslant on behalf of Alliance.

**From Jesse Scarlato:**

I spent most of the day in the house education committee following testimony on H. 3 the committee plans to finish testimony tomorrow, mark up the bill, and send it to appropriations. Below is a summary of testimony, taken from my notes, including any proposed changes to the bill.

**Don Stevens** Chief of the Nulhegan Band of the Coosuk-Abenaki

Proposed these changes to the bill: that the word "indigenous" be changed to "Abenaki" or "Abenaki and indigenous" and that the committee specifically include someone who is Abenaki. Stevens testified in support of the bill, and expressed concern that this bill may not hold the authority to make change - citing mandated curriculum changes after tribal recognition in 2006 but he said that no real progress was made.

**Sarika Tandon** Advisor, Racial Justice Alliance, Montpelier High School

Spoke from personal experiences of school being the place where she really became aware of racism, where images of people like herself were either absent or negative. And how exposure (to other races, cultures, etc.) is proven to reduce negative bias.

**Hope Petraro & Mary Ann Songhurst** Students, Montpelier High School

Testified in support of the bill saying that we need to actively address racism because it is pervasive and asked that the committee have a student voice, as an amendment to the bill.

**Jay Nichols** Executive Director, Vermont Principals' Association

We (the VPA) support standards of equity, but we do think this set of standards should be decided by the Department of Education.

Questions arose about independent schools, which would not be subject to H.3

**Shadiin Garcia** Ph.D. National Social Justice Consultant, Shoreline Consulting - Phone

Testified about a similar bill in Oregon. Underscored the importance of community group involvement and staying in contact with the department of education throughout the process.

**Amanda Rohndenberg** Director of Advocacy, Outright Vermont

Amanda drew the connection between curriculum inclusion, and less bullying and harassment, and a greater likelihood that LGBTQIA youth will complete high school and go on to higher education (according to the GLSN survey). Curriculum has been a priority for youth in Vermont.

**Rich Holschuh** Commissioner, Vermont Commission on Native American Affairs

Also supports specific Abenaki appointment to the committee. Underscored the importance of including Abenaki in an education curriculum that until 1976 said that no native people lived in Vermont.

**Alexa Gabriel** Preschool Teacher

Children internalize messages about race by the age of 3. Every child deserves to learn about experiences that are not their own, and experiences that mirror their own.

**Brenda Churchill** LGBTQIA Alliance of Vermont

Introduced the alliance and quizzed committee members on LGBTQIA people in history (no one knew more than 3 of the 12) and followed with short bios. Underscored the importance of LGBTQIA students seeing who they could be in the world.

**Sarah Launderville** Executive Director, Vermont Center for Independent Living

Asked that "ability-based bias" be replaced with "ableism" (page 9) Spoke in support of the intersectionality of H.3. Outlined Vermont's history of oppression and torture of people with disabilities and as a leader in eugenics. Expressed that her organization hopes that independent schools would be included in this bill (this seems unlikely at this time).

**Thursday January 24**, At Statehouse: Brenda Churchill and Keith Goslant

House Judiciary: Public Hearing: Fair and Impartial Policing: Committee heard community wide input on current practices and status of Fair and Impartial Policing. As yet, there is no bill that has been drafted. Committee is aware of $40,000 being removed from budget for this initiative during the prior session. They will be requesting monies be restored in this year’s budget adjustment act.

Brenda: Provided testimony on behalf of Alliance: Read Alliance mission statement to committee. Alliance currently has representation on Fair and Impartial Policing Task Force. Members of LGBTQIA communities are still reluctant to come forward. Advised that committee listen to personal stories and experiences. Advised committee to review available data. Alliance involved in providing training to VSP; more barracks still to be offered training. VT State Police actively recruiting within LGBTQ communities. Training is needed at all levels. People are still fearful during stops.

Brenda statements were echoed by personal stories regarding people being fearful of and reluctant to approach people from: Migrant Justice (immigrant farm workers), Mark Hughes/Justice For All, Tabitha Moore/NAACP-Rutland, Curtiss Reed/VT Partnership for Fairness and Diversity, and Lia Ernst/ACLU.

Law enforcement spoke regarding individual agencies adopting model Fair and Impartial Policing policies. Per Julio Thompson/Civil Rights Division Office of Attorney General, 70 out of 75 VT agencies are in compliance. Inclusive in policies is protocol not to ask questions regarding immigration status nor to share that information; however, testimony to the committee illustrated not all agencies are adhering to this protocol. The need for additional/continued training was stressed.

Keith: House Education: Provided testimony on behalf of Alliance for H.3:

Please reference last week’s 01/19 Liaison Report with these comments from Astrid Salvanas:

“Also, on page 12 says the report on bullying and harassment will be dissected by ethnic and racial groups, poverty status, disability status, English language learner status and gender. I see nothing about breaking out the data based on LGBTQIA status.”

Keith asked Committee to consider proposal to add “social groups” to page 12/reporting requirements of the bill. Elizabeth Novotny/Outright in committee room to provide support for amendment and to consult with Keith.

After committee debate, and consultation with Legislative Council, “sexual orientation and gender identity” were added to the bill as relates to reporting. Both Keith and Elizabeth agreed to this change.

Committee voted out H.3 by anonymous vote. Bill must now be reviewed by House Appropriations per Rule 35(a)

Brenda: Invited panelist for Town hall taping with Lt Governor Zuckerman and NAACP Vermont Director Tabitha Pohl-Moore. Topic was the Fair and Impartial Policing committee and racial bias in Vermont.

Brenda: Meeting with the Inclusive Sex Education Taskforce working on creating comprehensive and inclusive sex-ed curriculum.

Brenda and Keith: Alliance Executive Board meeting.

Friday January 25 Brenda Churchill: Fund raising efforts, inclusive of, now that Alliance is formally incorporated, requesting promised monies that have already been promised, i.e. from September: a split with the Pride Center for a Zero gravity fund raiser. Donations from the taping of the "T" at the Vermont comedy club.

Meeting scheduled to speak with potential grant writers for the Alliance.

Saturday January 26: Brenda Churchill. Representing Alliance at Drag Bingo at Stowe Winter Pride Festival. Alliance and Stonewall 50 are recipients of funds raised.