



March 15, 2017

The Honorable Rex Tillerson  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
Washington, DC 20521

Dear Secretary Tillerson,

On behalf of the Human Rights Campaign, the largest lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer advocacy organization in the United States, I am writing to you to express our disappointment and concern about the two Public Delegates of the U.S. Delegation to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) currently underway in New York.

We believe that the appointments of Lisa Correnti, Executive Vice President of the Center for Family & Human Rights (C-FAM), and Grace Melton, Associate for Social Issues at the United Nations at The Heritage Foundation, do not serve the interests of women, including lesbian, bisexual, transgender and queer (LBTQ) women in the United States and abroad. As individuals they have both publicly demonstrated anti-LGBTQ sentiments, and the organizations they belong to have longstanding anti-LGBTQ records.

C-FAM has been designated as an anti-LGBTQ hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center. Its President, Austin Ruse, is a highly visible international anti-LGBTQ extremist. He has called for help in stopping the “ghastly work” of the United Nations in protecting LGBTQ people from violence and discrimination, calling those efforts “deadly propaganda.” Lisa Correnti, its Vice President, has her own long anti-LGBTQ record. She recently co-authored an article that directly referred to Trump Administration efforts to undo policies protecting women, including LBTQ women, from violence.

The Heritage Foundation is an organization that asserts that laws protecting LGBTQ people are not “necessary” and that they “weaken ...the freedom of citizens and their associations to affirm their religious or moral convictions.” Grace Melton herself complained when “radical feminists” attempted to include protections for LBTQ women in the Sustainable Development Goals.

The CSW is indeed, as your announcement of the delegation states, “the most important annual meeting on women’s issues at the United Nations.... [where r]epresentatives of the CSW’s 47 member governments convene to discuss ways to improve women’s lives.”



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If the United States is truly committed to improving the lives of women, including LGBTQ women, in the U.S. and beyond, then Lisa Correnti and Grace Melton and the organizations they represent should not be the public face of our delegation. We urge you to immediately rescind the appointment of these delegates who do not represent our shared American values.

Sincerely,

Ty Cobb,  
Director HRC Global  
Human Rights Campaign

cc. The Honorable Nikki Haley  
U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations  
United States Mission to the United Nations  
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