

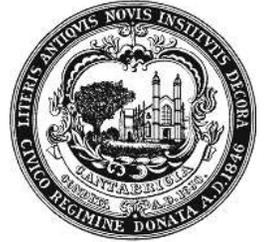
City of Cambridge

# Commission for Persons with Disabilities

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Gary Dmytryk  
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Katie Ashwill Allen

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*Executive Director/  
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Kate Thurman  
*Project Coordinator*

## **An Open Letter to the Cambridge City Council and our Cambridge Neighbors**

March 10, 2017

Dear Cambridge City Council and Neighbors,

Last November, we experienced an election that was unprecedented in our lifetime. In the weeks that followed, we have witnessed an increase in expressions of intolerance and hatred directed towards members of our nation based on our real or perceived disabilities, races, ethnicities, genders, sexual orientations, religions, and other aspects of our identities. This intolerance and hatred has been emboldened by some elected officials who ran on campaigns fueled by demeaning and derogatory comments, some of which have been directed towards persons with disabilities.

As members of your Commission for Persons with Disabilities, we want to reaffirm our mission to reduce and eliminate the barriers that people with disabilities experience in our community. We want to remind you that we are available for you in this critical time. To that end:

- We are concerned with the behavior of any and all elected officials who mock or are complicit in the mockery of persons with disabilities, and we will continue to advise and give voice to these concerns on behalf of our constituents.
- We urge all our elected officials to be mindful of issues that impact individuals with disabilities. We urge them to comport themselves in a manner that shows our nation and the world that we value persons with disabilities in our communities. We ask that they model respect and compassion for all of our residents with disabilities, and we decry any and all demeaning and devaluing of us.
- We want to assure our fellow residents with disabilities and their families that we will continue to work with (and for) them to promote awareness, inclusion and safety in our City for all people, including and especially persons with disabilities, as is our mandate. We will continue to hold you all in high esteem, and endeavor to ensure all in our community do so as well.

*PROMOTING ACCESSIBILITY THROUGH AWARENESS*



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Please do not hesitate to reach out to us at any time. You can contact the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities by phone or email, or by attending our monthly advisory board meetings. We are here for you. We want to help in whatever way we can.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Dmytryk". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "G".

Gary Dmytryk  
Chair