



Boston City Council  
**Kendra Lara**  
District 6 Councilor

June 28, 2023

According to the Boston Police Department, On June 17th, at around 11:11 am, officers responded to a call about an unconscious person —later pronounced dead by Boston EMS— at the Mary-Allen McCormack BHA Housing Development. In the residence were four children who each had a parent present, and the parents, alongside the officers who responded, took the necessary steps to avoid having the children see the deceased. This is a heartbreaking situation. No matter the circumstances of the death, the incident has impacted this family and this community, and I send my thoughts and prayers as they grieve.

As elected officials, we are responsible for handling these tragedies with the respect and dignity our constituents deserve. Instead, in the days following the incident, I saw from three members of the Boston City Council behavior that lacked empathy and respect for the facts and stoked the kind of homophobic and transphobic rhetoric that puts our most vulnerable residents at risk. Our colleagues have actively misgendered the trans women involved, calling them “men in wigs.” In direct contradiction with the statements of the Boston Police, they’ve miscategorized the conditions of a constituent's home and spread stories about “sex toys and drugs” that are unsubstantiated to date, furthering the false right-wing narrative that our trans siblings are sexual deviants who our children need protecting from.

Although our colleagues voted favorably for a resolution celebrating Pride Month, they have shown no respect for this community, opting instead for scandalizing a tragedy to garner press attention and political points with the extreme right in our City under the guise of public safety.

We’ve seen an unprecedented and dangerous spike in discriminatory legislation nationwide while the epidemic of violence against transgender, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming people continues its rise. Earlier this month, the Human Rights Campaign declared a state of emergency for LGBTQ+ people in the U.S., touted as a call to action for all people in power. Because of these realities, the LGBTQ+ community looks to their elected officials for leadership and support rather than conspiracies.

As chair of the Committee on Housing and Community Development, I’m committed to ensuring working families have dignified housing. Last year, our office began hosting coffee hours in public housing developments to hear directly from residents. We’ve met with the BHA leadership team and are committed to working collaboratively on a transformative plan for our residents. This work will continue throughout the city long after the lights and camera disappear.

As an ally of the LGBTQ+ community, I will not remain silent when they are attacked and vilified. As always, I am committed to learning the facts, responding to our constituent's needs, regardless of income, gender identity, or sexual orientation, and working collaboratively with the Boston Housing Authority to ensure dignified housing conditions for all our residents.

In solidarity,

Kendra Lara, Boston City Councilor D6  
Chair, Committee on Housing and Community Development