



Commissioner Brad Avakian
Bureau of Labor & Industries

Press Release

For Immediate Distribution

October 10, 2012

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BOLI: Substantial Evidence of Discrimination at P Club

Civil rights investigators find evidence of discrimination against transgendered Oregonians

PORTLAND – The Civil Rights Division of the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) has concluded its investigation into allegations of unlawful discrimination by Portland’s Twilight Room Annex, formerly known as the P Club, finding substantial evidence that the bar, through owner Chris Penner, sought to keep a group of transgender patrons out of the establishment based on their gender identity.

“No place of public accommodations in Oregon is going to be allowed to discriminate based on gender identity,” Oregon Labor and Industries Commissioner Brad Avakian said. “Enforcing civil rights laws is important to all Oregonians, especially the fundamental right to patronize businesses of your choice without being summarily barred based on a group affiliation.”

Pursuing a [complaint filed by Avakian](#), state investigators found evidence confirming that Penner left phone messages asking a group of transgendered patrons to stop visiting the P Club because they were allegedly harming business by creating a perception that it is a “tranny bar.” Investigators found that Penner’s contention that the group, known as the Rose City T-Girls, was disruptive and generated complaints from other patrons was unsupported by interviews with P Club employees and other patrons, and the agency’s letter of determination concludes that no concerns were ever raised to the T-Girls—even in the phone messages from Penner himself.

“The P Club never notified the T-Girls of any complaints about their behavior and never took any steps to remove allegedly troublesome individuals,” Avakian added. “Blocking the entire group from visiting the P Club in reaction to rumors that the establishment ‘is a tranny bar’ is an overreaction, is unfair, and is on its face unlawful discrimination.”

With the Civil Rights Division’s investigation complete, absent settlement of the case, the next step in the process will be the issuance of formal charges and a notice of hearing by BOLI’s Administrative Prosecution Unit.

For more information about BOLI’s efforts to protect workplaces and the civil rights of all Oregonians, visit <http://www.oregon.gov/BOLI>.

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