



April 8, 2019

Mayor Liccardo, Vice Mayor Jones
and Members of the City Council
San Jose City Hall
200 E. Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

Dear Mayor Liccardo and Members of the City Council:

We are a coalition of LGBTQ organizations, and we are writing to express our deep disappointment that the City of San Jose has entered into an agreement that has allowed a Chick-fil-A to open at the Norman Y. Mineta San Jose International Airport.

On March 6, 2018, the San Jose City Council entered into an agreement with Host International, Inc. to extend the term of their agreement for six years, from June 30, 2020 to June 30, 2026. Among other actions, the agreement called for the host to “refresh” the concession program with new concepts. One of those new concepts is Chick-fil-A, a company with a long-standing legacy of working against our community and supporting anti-LGBTQ organizations. Chick-fil-A has become a symbol of intolerance for our community.

Chick-fil-A has a long history of using its profits to support organizations who actively work to oppose, overturn and shame those in same-sex marriages. [1]

Most disturbing are Chick-fil-A’s donations as recently as 2017 totaling in the millions to organizations that serve “troubled youth” or donations to organizations teaching youth that homosexuality is morally wrong and that same-sex marriage is simply “rage against Jesus Christ and His values.” Research shows that LGBTQ youth experience a much higher rate of discrimination, homelessness and suicide than their straight counterparts. [2]

The Human Rights Campaign gave Chick-fil-A a zero in its annual buyers guide. While the City of San Jose obtained a perfect score in its equality index rated against other municipalities. We question why our largest economic endeavor in the San Jose Airport does not mirror the values of our city at large. [3 & 4]

To millions of visitors every year, Norman Y. Mineta International Airport is their front door to this City, and we want all of them to feel welcome. Chick-fil-A does not represent San Jose's values. It is not worthy of being the company that visitors first see, and it does not make for a more inclusive environment.

Additionally, San Jose's international airport has received billions of dollars of taxpayer funded investments. Our city employees spend time and therefore money maintaining its infrastructure, and public financial tools have been dispatched to create this airport into the gem that this city deserves.

We humbly ask that the City Council facilitate a greater understanding on this issue for the very concerned LGBTQ people and allies who use the San Jose airport by convening a meeting that includes City of San Jose and SJC Airport officials, our community and Host International Inc. We further request that, at the earliest legal opportunity, Chick-fil-A leave Mineta San Jose International Airport and be replaced with an organization that shares our values of inclusivity and diversity, and that welcomes all visitors to San Jose.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this important issue.

Sincerely,

BAYMEC

Billy DeFrank LGBTQ+ Community Center

HRC SF Bay Area, Steering Committee Co-Chair Jerry Mai & Member Mark Gilley

The LGBTQ Youth Space

Rainbow Chamber of Commerce of Silicon Valley

Silicon Valley Pride

Silicon Valley Stonewall Democrats

[1] <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/26/us/gay-rights-uproar-over-chick-fil-a-widens.html>

[2] <https://thinkprogress.org/chick-fil-a-anti-lgbtq-donations-tax-filings-62ca15281f17/>

[3] <https://www.hrc.org/resources/coming-soon-hrcs-new-buying-for-workplace-equality-guide?orgid=61530>

[4] https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/MEI-2017-FullReport.pdf?_ga=2.202406679.723002846.1554534646-1378568906.1554534646