

# WOMEN UNITING

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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21st June 2020

## **ARE WOMEN NOT EXTRAORDINARY?**

**Are media outlets continuing to ignore women led organisations in favour of those led by men?**

Last Friday, several news outlets, including the BBC and the Independent, gave prominent coverage to the formation of a cross party political group, representing a number of political LGBT+ groups, calling it **“an extraordinary move”**.

Members of the group said **“This is unique”** (1).

The group had responded to reports that the Minister for Women and Equalities was going to publish her long awaited response to the consultation on reform of the Gender Recognition Act.

We were surprised that the media found this such a significant story, and that the group is claiming this action is ‘unique’, indeed we are baffled as to why it received such a lot of coverage, because cross party groups of **WOMEN** working together on this issue have been studiously ignored.

The fact that we have been doing so for some time is apparently not considered “extraordinary”.

Inspired by ForWomenScotland, who have been working together cross party since mid 2018, **Women Uniting UK** was formed in late 2019, initially as a cross party coalition of women from six major UK political parties.

We published a joint petition on International Women’s Day, the 8th March this year, now signed by over 4000 people with new signatures added every day (2). Thousands more signed the individual political party pledges and petitions.

We sent out a press release announcing this, (attached) to dozens of media outlets and journalists, including a large number at the BBC. It was ignored.

In April, our political alliance was joined by non-party-politically aligned women’s groups, including Fair Play for Women, FiLiA, and the Women’s Human Rights Campaign, to send a joint open letter to the Minister for Women and Equalities, the Rt.Hon Elizabeth Truss. (3)

Again, we tried to get media interest and again we were ignored. Since we shared that letter, more groups have joined us, including Authentic Equity Alliance, For Women Scotland, LGB Alliance, and Transgender Trend among others.

We stand by everything we said in our petition, and in our joint letter.

**We support Liz Truss in saying NO to Self ID and YES to clear and unambiguous guidance on the rights of women and girls to single SEX spaces. This removes rights from no-one.**

We stand united in our defence of the rights of every human being to define themselves as they wish. But we will not allow the rights of women and children to single sex spaces to be removed. Those spaces and services provide safety, dignity, comfort and privacy.

We will not stand by as the power to name ourselves, to count ourselves, to represent ourselves, is removed.

**The word woman is taken.**

(1) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-53101071>

(2) <https://www.change.org/WomenUnitingUKProtectOurSexBasedRights>

(3) <https://filia.org.uk/resources/2020/4/24/letter-to-equalities-minister-for-women>

(Many of the groups mentioned in this letter have written their own open letters, and letters to Liz Truss, their own MPs, MSPs, other political appointees, the Women & Equalities Committee, and the Prime Minister on behalf of their groups and as individuals. We are happy to provide contact details for these groups should you wish to talk to them about their particular views.)

**Joint Political Petition signatories, Women Uniting UK**

**Conservative Women's Pledge**

**Green Feminists Women and Girls Declaration**

**Labour Women's Declaration**

**Liberal Democrats Grassroots Challenge to Policy on Women**

**SNP Women's Pledge**

**Women's Equality Party for Protection of Sex Based Rights**

**Signatories to the letter of 23rd April 2020**

**Women Uniting UK**

**Conservative Women's Pledge**

**Green Feminists Women and Girls Declaration**

**Labour Women's Declaration**

**Liberal Democrats Grassroots Challenge to Policy on Women**

**SNP Women's Pledge**

**Women's Equality Party for Protection of Sex Based Rights**

**Fair Play for Women**

**FILIA**

**WHRC**

**New signatories to this letter**

**Authentic Equity Alliance**

**For Women Scotland**

**LGB Alliance**

**Transgender Trend**