



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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EQUALITY TEXAS MOURNS THE DEATH OF MYRA ICAL

Houston area now has 7 unsolved transgender murder cases in past decade

Austin, Texas (January 23, 2010) – Equality Texas mourns the tragic death of Myra Chanel Ical who was murdered earlier this week in Houston. Ical's body was found January 18th in a vacant field in the 4300 block of Garrott in Houston, and showed signs of a defensive struggle according to police reports.

The Houston Police Department is seeking help from the public on the case. Anyone with information is asked to call Houston Crime Stoppers at 713-222-8477 or the Homicide Division at 713-308-3600. Callers may remain anonymous. Please refer to incident #8280510-F.

The Houston area now has seven (7) unsolved transgender murder cases in the past decade. The Texas James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Act, passed in 2001, provides enhanced penalties for hate crimes motivated by race, religion, color, sex, disability, sexual preference, age, or national origin. The Byrd Hate Crimes Act does not currently include gender identity/expression.

Equality Texas asks for the public's help in solving Ms. Ical's murder. We also call upon area media outlets to be respectful in their reporting on this case. Several media reports have referred to the victim using male pronouns. Standard media style, including the Associated Press, is clear that transgender people should be referred to using pronouns that reflect their gender identity.

The Transgender Foundation of America will hold a candlelight memorial on Monday, January 25th at 6pm at the site where Ms. Ical's body was found – the 4300 block of Garrott in Houston.

Equality Texas advocates and lobbies for the elimination of discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity/expression. ***Equality Texas Foundation*** educates and engages the public about policies and their effect on Texans of all sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions.



More information on our work is available at www.EqualityTexas.org

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