

HB 139

I am a clergy wife

My name is Mildred Boesser. On the 26th of this month I will be 88 years old. This year my husband and I have been married 65 years. We have 4 children, 4 grandchildren, and 2 great grandchildren, all of whom are current residents of Alaska.

We are all what society calls "straight". All, that is, except one who happens to be in love with someone of the same sex. She has lived all of her adult life (she is now 61) in the shadow of the fear, hostility, and discrimination which has come to surround this subject.

For the life of me I cannot find one rational reason why she is denied the respect, protection and basic civil rights given her siblings and cousins simply because of who she happens to be in love with! Except for that one thing, she is exactly the same as any of them.

In my lifetime I have witnessed many changes. I was born in 1925 and the question on an application then was: "Are you a woman?" If the answer was yes, then the application could be denied. When we were married in the 1940s the question was: "Are you black?" If the answer was yes, then the application could be denied. Here it is 2013 and the question seems to be: "Are you in love with someone of the same sex?" If the answer is yes, then the application can be denied legally, along with all the other rights and privileges afforded if the answer is "no".

It makes me extremely sad that in this State I call home and love so dearly, all its citizens are not treated equally. Simply being in love does not deny you or me the right to equal treatment and protection under the law!

Mildred Boesser
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4.9.13 HB 139 Testimony Doctor's Orders!

As a 30 year licensed physician, and 20 year Alaskan, I know too well the repercussions on the health of those who suffer from discrimination.

Living in a world outside the protection from harm and injustice afforded all other citizens, gay youth feel especially unwelcome in our world. Alaska has the highest teen suicide rate in the country. And gay youth have a higher rate of suicide than their non-gay counterparts.

On multiple occasions here in Juneau survivors of teen suicide attempts shared with me as their physician, that they would rather be dead than gay.

With the passage of HB 139 we have an opportunity to improve the health of our society. The American Academy of Family Physicians, the Alaska Academy of Family Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Academy of Psychiatry all have statutes that support the validity of legislation like HB 139 for the health of all. There is no other right choice.

Thank you for voting Yes on HB 139. Doctors' Orders!

**Maureen Longworth
P O Box 21084
Juneau, Alaska 99802**

4-9-13

Testimony re House Bill # 139:

"An Act adding to the powers & duties of the State Commission for Human Rights; & relating to and prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity or expression."

I am not gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexual or any other labeled group of Alaskan citizens. I am also not deaf, naive, or in denial about the fact that all of these fellow citizens ~~DO~~ experience discrimination throughout their lives in the State of Alaska, specifically based on sexual orientation or gender identity or expression. I have personally witnessed the painful, unjust, and I believe unconstitutional treatment of these individuals - my family member, friends, neighbors and co-workers. Although I have testified in hearings to try to counter this discrimination at city and school district levels, unfortunately it is still necessary to fight for the EQUAL RIGHTS of these fellow Alaskans. They need this protection under the law. I have been blessed to be a proud Alaska resident since 1959.

Please make me proud of your just decision by passing this much needed protection for a large group of your constituents. Sincerely,

Cindy Boeser

Cindy Boeser
822 Oct. 11, 1980 9980

You may call me at (907) 723-2768 if you would like to discuss further. Thank-you.

4/9/2013

Dear State Affairs Committee:

Because they want to attract the most talented workers, most Fortune 1000 companies have clauses like HB 139. Many of these policies have been in place for years. It makes good business sense. Alaska needs people with skills in science, technology, engineering and math, and young techie workers want equality in their communities and workplaces. Alaska is not yet a welcoming state for LGBT people.

Not having this statewide anti-discrimination clause automatically communicates disfavor and backwardness.

For 15 years I worked at our Juneau Job Center, assisting people with employment issues. I heard many stories of LGBT discrimination, and many of these folks were preparing to leave the state.

My hero now is my Ohio Republican dad, Wilbur, who changed his POV about my being gay. I've written a couple My Turns about him. He would give his blessing to HB 139.

Thank you,

Lin G. Davis
3099 Nowell Ave
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20 year Juneau resident

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OPINION

OUR VIEW

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Getting on the list will not be
without work. Potential recipients
will have to file paperwork with the
state. They'll have to qualify as non-
profits by the federal definition and
pass muster with the state Depart-
ment of Revenue. Not every outfit

COMPASS: Points of view from the community

To gay daughter, father became hero

By LIN DAVIS

As President Abraham Lincoln said, "Trample on the rights of others and you lose the genius of your own independence."

The close statewide advisory vote April 3 yielded an impressive educational opportunity. Responsible citizens wrote wise civic lessons on constitutional protection. The letters to the editor could be gathered into a classroom text. I'm proud of the thinking and empathy that came forward, and I'm proud of the Alaskans who saw the genius in a no vote.

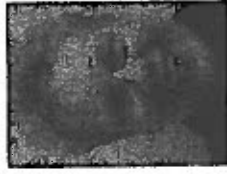
In 1954, as a seventh-grader, I discovered I was gay. I didn't know what to call myself. I had somehow heard the word "homo," but knew it mostly as a milk description. I didn't know any gay people, and I didn't know if I would even like gay people. I felt abandoned.

For most of my life, this country has been discussing whether gay people should exist, and during the past three decades the dialogue has ascended into whether gays should have equal rights.

In this lifetime of contentedness, I take heart from my father, Wilbur. As author Maya Angelou says, "We live in direct relationship to our heroes. We take spirit from them and that builds our courage."

As a mechanical engineer at GE, Wilbur made explosives. A total opposite, I made my parents take me home in the middle of the first movie I ever saw; three boy bullies had pushed a little girl into a large Hollywood mud puddle, her beautiful white dress ruined forever, and I was undone.

As a lifelong Republican, Wilbur donated to all the anti-gay PAC's starting in the



My father courageously left Cincinnati and his anti-gay church buddies and flew alone into the great unknown of our legally unrecognized "wedding."

1970s. As an adult, on each visit, I sat wide-eyed at the kitchen table next to his stack of anti-gay literature. Someday museums will arrange this material to show what our generation experienced. No mother holding her newborn would want these things said about her child.

In the 1970s, our uncivil arguments curdled the air. In the 1980s, we declared a truce. In 1990, I introduced him to my mate. The two of them, big teasers, became fast buddies. Invited to our commitment ceremony, Wilbur courageously left Cincinnati and his anti-gay church buddies and flew alone into the great unknown of our legally unrecognized "wedding." An entire three-day weekend with a hundred of our friends awaited him.

He was a hit. He charmed with his Midwest humor and farm stories. His tireless labor helped us set up for 100 people. During the ceremony, he blessed us and announced he would add my partner to our family tree, his pride and joy.

He revealed that no family members had come to his wedding with my mother. He was born a little north of the Mason-Dixon, and Mom was born a little south. In 1941,

both families festered with hatred from the Civil War 80 years before. He didn't want me to be without family on this special day.

Witnessing our ceremony, meeting our friends and my mate's large, friendly and accepting family, he became a great supporter of our life partnership. We drove him back to the Oakland airport in our "just married" pickup, and passersby kept asking him, "Who's the lucky woman?" He would smile and say, "Both of them."

In 1995 he was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and carried that same graceful courage and humor into his illness and last days. My partner and I were with him when he caught his last outgoing tide.

As John Muir said of Stikkeen, his Glacier Bay travel buddy: "At first the least promising ... of my dog friends, our storm battle for life brought him to light, and through him as through a window, I have ever since been looking with deeper sympathy into all my fellow mortals."

My father would be honored to be the light through a new window on this topic.

Lin Davis of Juneau is a state worker and plaintiff in the same-sex partner benefits case.