

Jody Simpson

From: River Ramuglia <r
Sent: Friday, March 31, 2017 3:54 AM
To: Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Tom Begich
Subject: Senate Bill 72

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear Members of the Health and Social Services Committee,

My name is River Ramuglia. I am writing to urge you to support Senator Berta Gardner's efforts to strengthen Alaska's Human Rights statutes by including a prohibition against discrimination in employment, housing, public accommodations, and banking based on gender identity, orientation or expression.

As a gay man, I have first-hand experience when it comes to this issue. I was born and raised in Alaska, attended Anchorage public schools, used to work for the State, and intend to return to Alaska upon completion of my PhD. I certainly hope that, after all this time, Alaska will be a more welcoming place than it was when I was growing up. I am weary of hearing arguments that discrimination "is not an issue," often from heterosexual people unaware of the privilege conferred upon those whose sexual orientation corresponds to a heteronormative paradigm.

Let me tell you from experience: it wreaks incredible psychological havoc to be forced to hide one's sexual orientation in school, in the workplace, or when you're trying to rent an apartment for the first time, especially when you know that being who you are has social and professional repercussions. I know married members of the gay community in Alaska who must conceal their identities and hide their spouses because they know the consequences would result in termination of their employment. Surely I do not need to remind you of the vitriolic hate that came to the surface of our community in the summer of 2009, when the assembly passed a non-discrimination ordinance subsequently vetoed by then-Mayor Dan Sullivan. Do you need any more evidence that this type of discrimination exists in Alaska than the horrific signs and t-shirts wielded and worn by those testifying against the ordinance? Can you imagine what it would be like to have a person like that as your landlord, clinging to an affordable apartment in an overcrowded, overpriced rental market? Or, what if your landlord knew your sexual orientation or identity and decided to increase your rent twofold? Unfortunately, this is the reality faced by many LGBT Alaskans, and I have heard far too many stories of this happening to my friends.

I urge you to consider the consequences of North Carolina's passage of the "bathroom bill," a law unfairly targeting transgender people that cost the state billions (yes, billions) in revenue and investment from companies and organizations who realized the dangerous societal consequences of marginalizing any particular group in a population. In Alaska's current fiscal climate, how wise is it to make a state even more unappealing to outside investment? We should be trying to attract top talent from across the nation and spur further investment in Alaska to ensure a stable future. Passing Senator Gardner's bill would send a message that Alaska is a welcoming place for everyone. Let's find the Tim Cook of Alaska who can revolutionize our state and make it competitive for a 21st-century global economy. Senator Gardner's bill is a positive step in that direction.

Sincerely,
River Ramuglia

Jody Simpson

From: Tasha Elizarde
Sent: Thursday, March 30, 2017 11:52 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Tom Begich
Cc: Rep. Sam Kito; Sen. Dennis Egan; Sen. Berta Gardner
Subject: Testimony in Support of SB72, Tasha Elizarde (Juneau)

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Hello,

My name is Tasha Elizarde and I am an 18-year-old high school senior from Juneau, Alaska. My House District is 33 (Rep. Kito) and my Senate District is Q (Sen. Egan).

I greatly support SB72 and I appreciate Sen. Gardner for taking initiative and advancing human rights issues in Alaska. Thankfully, earlier this year the City and Borough of Juneau passed an ordinance prohibiting sexual orientation and gender identity and expression-based discrimination. Although I am not personally affected by discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, I have friends who do identify differently and, although Juneau is a very welcoming community, are sometimes discriminated against. One of my friend was bullied constantly by another student simply because he is a transman. Other students would even go out of their way to call him by the wrong name, creating a bad atmosphere for his learning. Nowadays, he is much more accepted in the school and there have been fewer harsh incidents based on his gender. However, the reason for the fewer bad incidents was due to a change in society - a shift that now finds this sort of discrimination as intolerable.

Yet, there are still people out there who still believe it is alright to discriminate people against their own existence. No Alaskan should have to bear such harsh bullying and in worse cases, systemic denial of jobs or property, simply because of who they are. It's time Alaska publically acknowledge its acceptance of every Alaskan living in our state by updating the Non-Discrimination Act to include sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

I am happy to see SB72 up in the Legislature and hope to see it sail through the Senate, House and Governor's desk as soon as possible.

Thank you for listening to my testimony,

Tasha Elizarde
House District 33
Senate District Q

Jody Simpson

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From: jen laroe <j
Sent: Thursday, March 30, 2017 9:23 PM
To: Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Tom Begich
Cc: Sen. Natasha Von Imhof; Sen. Peter Micciche
Subject: SB 72 vote yes!


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Senate Health & Social Services Committee members~

I write to you today to provide my testimony regarding Senate Bill 72 to add to protection from discriminatory practices in employment, housing, education and public services for Alaska-resident members of the LGBTQ community for the sake of humanity. Being accepted for who you believe to be, who you know you are is a core fundamental human right. Sadly there are citizens of our great state and country who don't accept others who don't fit into a narrow subjective view or definition. People are not definable. Everyone deserves equal and protected access to these basic areas. Please add this community or class of people to the protected list. Expand anti-discrimination protection to apply to the following 8 classes: race, sexual orientation/gender identity or expression, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, and familial status

Thank you for serving the citizens of Alaska.

[How Science Is Helping Us Understand Gender](#)

 **How Science
Is Helping Us
Understand
Ge...**

Jennifer LaRoe

Juneau, AK

Callie Dietrich

Sutton, Alaska 99674

March 30, 2017

Senator
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Wasilla AK, 99654
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Dear Senator David Wilson,

My name is Callie Dietrich; I am a born and raised Alaskan, UAA alumni, and RN at Providence Alaska Medical Center. As a nurse, I have dedicated my life to understanding the physical, emotional, and spiritual aspect of human physiology. My senior capstone project last spring explored the relationship that people in the LGBTQ+ community have with their environment. We found that ensuring an anti-discriminatory environment has a positive correlation to healthier communities. For this reason, I am writing to voice my support of Senate Bill 72 and I want you to support this bill as well.

It is well known and researched that healthy, safe environments lend to healthy people and communities. It is also well known that people in the LGBTQ+ community face high rates of discrimination related hate crimes, stigmatization, slander, and general nonacceptance in communities, and thus have high rates of suicide and depression. This is particularly concerning in conservative districts such as Alaska. As community members, the least we can do is make it policy that LGBTQ+ community members are protected from discrimination so that they may be productive, secure, and safe citizens.

SB72 seeks to include anti-discrimination protection for sexual orientation and gender identity minorities such as lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBTQ+) people in Alaska under the State Commission for Human Rights. As a lifelong resident of Alaska, I imagine it as a place where anyone can feel that they can get housing, stay in housing, get a job, keep a job, and feel safe against discriminatory crimes regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity as well as many of the other outlined criteria in Alaska's State Human Rights Commission including race, religion, color, sex, disability, or national origin.

I would urge those in opposition of this bill to think of LGBTQ+ anti-discrimination as a civil rights issue that has been left open to hate crimes, rejection from housing, and termination of jobs. Please support SB 72 and help facilitate safer, healthier communities.

Thank you for your time and consideration,



Callie Dietrich