

ALASKA LEGISLATURE COMMITTEE FILES 1997-1998 8672

9246 HOUSE JUDICIARY

Public Opinion Statement of
Dena R. Ivey
P.O. Box 80164
Fairbanks, Alaska 99708

My name is Dena Ivey, and I am here to testify against SJR-42. I was born and raised here, in Fairbanks, graduated from Lathrop High School in 1989, and joined the Air Force in 1992. I served our country proudly and honorably for four years, then returned to Fairbanks to pursue higher education. I am also a Native activist, and am also here to speak in defense of my fellow Alaskan Native and non-Native homosexuals, who desire to be afforded the same fundamental rights as all other Alaskan citizens.

For me, as with all other homosexuals, being gay was not a choice I made. In His infinite wisdom, God made that choice for me when I was born, in the same manner that He decided I would be female with brown hair and brown eyes. The only choice I made with regard to my sexual orientation was to accept and celebrate it as the only lifestyle that would make me truly happy. Unfortunately, in Alaska, this happiness is conditional. For four years, I lived with unbelievable paranoia and fear while in the military. I cannot walk down the street, holding hands with my significant other, without the fear of being physically or verbally assaulted for such public displays of affection; affection which I see among heterosexuals every day. I am denied the opportunity to share in the rights and responsibilities of marriage...a basic human right which the heterosexual members of my family currently enjoy.

Whose responsibility is it, to question the devices and decisions of God? There are those who would say that it would behoove society for me to live a lifestyle that was not mine to begin with. Since when has God condoned living dishonestly, living a lie? Jesus said, "Love thy neighbor as thyself." Jesus did not say, "Love thy neighbor as thyself, but only if he is heterosexual." For Jesus, love is unconditional. Jesus was an advocate of compassion and love, not of hate and fear. Hate and fear are the devices of His adversary. I think Jesus would be appalled to witness the amount of hate and fear which has arisen against human beings such as myself; hate and fear which is evoked in His name, no less. This hate and fear, rooted in ignorance, is the premise of legislation such as SJR-42.

It is interesting to find, in this great state where individual freedom is emphasized and regulation is resisted, that such regulation should be imposed upon people like myself...people who's only desire is to be productive members of society: to work and raise healthy families and contribute to the betterment of Alaska. It is disheartening to note that Alaska is willing to accept our contributions, but not willing to acknowledge us as legitimate human beings.

Thank you for your time, and for affording us the opportunity to make ourselves heard.

Respectfully Yours,



Dena R. Ivey



STATE of ALASKA

Delta Junction Legislative Information Office

P.O. Box 1189
Room 210, Jarvis Office Center
Delta Junction, AK 99737
(907) 895-4236

Fax: (907) 895-5017

April 27, 1998

Kevin

TO: House Judiciary

Please accept the enclosed originals of written testimony for the House Judiciary Committee hearing that was scheduled on 4/27/98.

Copies of this testimony were transmitted by fax on 4/27/98.

Thank you,

Tammy Renee Hall

Tammy Renee' Hall
Information Assistant

Enclosures: 5



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Judiciary
 committee on SJR 42, dated 4-27-98.
 bill/ subject committee name
(SJR42)

I strongly support this bill that would define marriage as being a union between a male and a female. Anything different from this would be an aberration - and I can't see making an "aberration" a lawful thing.

Signed: Jo E. McBride
 Testifier

Representing (Optional)
P.O. Box 779 Delta, AK 99737
 Address
907-895-4009
 Phone No.

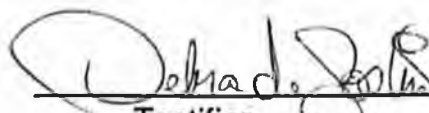


Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary
 committee name
 committee on SJR 42, dated 4-27-98
 bill/ subject

I urge you to pass this Bill. You will hear many voices asking you to vote against this Bill. They seek to redefine marriage. Since the beginning of time marriage has been a lifetime union between one man and one woman. I ~~am~~ for one will not accept the defining down of marriage. If few or if many choose to deviate from the norm it puts us under no obligation to change the definition of what is normal. ~~A lot of people do things that~~ ~~are~~ Homosexual marriage is not normal. Pass this Bill so that the people of Alaska have the opportunity to decide for themselves.

Signed:


 Testifier
RPA, Dist 35, Chickwoman
 Representing (Optional)
Box 377, Delta Jct, AK 99737
 Address
(907) 895-4565
 Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the judiciary
 committee on SJR 42, dated 27 April 98
 bill/ subject _____
 committee name _____

Why redefine marriage? Those who wish to do so ignore the God-given foundations of our society and the underpinnings of our culture. It is clearly a destructive design, based on selfish and self-seeking motives. It will open the doors for them to begin similar actions in other states. Please support this bill.

Signed:

Marla Willis *Marla Willis*
 Testifier
RPA Comm, The Woman - Delta Jct, Precinct
 Representing (Optional)
P.O. Box 375 - Delta Jct, AK 99737
 Address
895 - 4161
 Phone No. _____

Please support SJR 42. We feel very strongly that to allow same sex marriages in our state would lead to a very negative image of our great state. Let our state be the state to set and keep laws that are honorable and good, that lift up human dignity. Same sex marriage can never be anything but demeaning, vulgar, cheap and wrong. Some day these very people who want same sex marriage will reap great turmoil in their physical and emotional health. This bill in the long run will cost our state millions of dollars for health and mental counseling. The voters of Alaska should be given the right to make this decision not an unelected judge. Respectfully, Marlin and Neva Starnes

Marlin L. Starnes

P.O. Box 1293

DELTA JCT. AK.

99737

Neva I. Starnes

P.O. Box 1293

DELTA JCT. AK.

99737



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the _____

committee name

committee on _____, dated _____

bill/ subject

I support the bill to define a marriage as a legal union between one man and one woman. Any other definition of "marriage" I believe will contribute to the moral decline of our nation.

Signed:

Garth McCord

Testifier

RPI Treasurer Big Delta District

Representing (Optional)

Box 511 Delta Jct.

Address

895-4992

Phone No.



LEGISLATIVE INFORMATION OFFICE
119 N. CUSHMAN, SUITE 101
FAIRBANKS, AK 99701
452-4448

DATE: 4/27/98

Please accept the enclosed original(s) of written testimony for the

House Judiciary (STR42) teleconference scheduled on

4/27/98. A copy of this testimony was transmitted to your committee via fax.

Thank you,



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Judiciary Committee
Committee Name
 Committee on SJR 42 Dated April 27, 98
Bill / Subject

I am in favor of SJR 42. Please pass this along to the voters of Alaska. I do not think that a judge should be able to impact Alaskans on such a major social issue without a challenge. Our constitution in article 1 section 2 declares that all political power is inherent in the people. So let the people answer this political issue! Same sex marriage is a major departure from historical and contemporary meaning of marriage.

SIGNED:

John B. Cuyhite
 Testifier

myself and family
 Representing

PO Box 58003 Fbks, AK 99711 488-7886
 Address / Phone Number

Testimony for April 27, 1998--Jeff Walters

I wish to testify today against Senate Joint Resolution No. 42.

I am against Senate Joint Resolution No. 42 because it seeks to legislate discrimination and because it is an attack on the privacy rights of all Alaskans. The wording of the resolution is such that it is meant as an undeniable attack on gay men and lesbians and denies them the legal rights afforded to the heterosexual majority. The Superior Court judge noted in his decision that it is a fundamental right of all people to choose their life partner and that, had the will of the majority been left in place in the past, segregation would still exist today. I think this attack on a certain segment of our society is meant to keep that segment from attaining the rights that the majority has. It is discrimination, pure and simple.

Another line of the resolution disturbs me as much as the first. If passed by a majority of our population in November, the legislature could "by law, enact additional requirements relating to marriage." What in the world could this mean? Is our state legislature willing to go even further to dominate our population, invade our privacy, and eliminate our right to make our own decisions? This clear attack on the privacy and rights of Alaskans should be a warning to us all. How far will the state go to legislate its own view of morality?

I would like to add that I am a gay man and that I am in a long-term, committed, and loving relationship. My family, and the family of my life partner, are both wonderful and accepting. We spend holidays with them, talk on the phone often, and share wonderful times when we can visit. Two summers ago my life partner and I flew his mother and niece to Alaska for a visit: a wonderful experience for us all. To imply that our relationship is not as honorable and loving as other relationships is a personal insult to not only me, but also to our families.

I have not been willing to publicly testify before because of my job, but I think it

^{is state that}
is important for you to know what I do for a living. I am a science and math teacher at West Valley High School here in Fairbanks. In the past I have not been willing to "come out" and be open about my relationship, ^{because of fear, but I don't want to live in fear.} but I now feel compelled to do so because of the nature of this resolution. I treat my students with respect for who they are, but I do not believe that this resolution affords me or many of my friends a similar respect. I am deeply troubled by the message that Senator Leman and others is sending out and, should this pass, I see a dangerous and divisive seven months ahead as this issue heads for a popular vote. I feel that I have no choice but to speak my conscience and follow my heart if this debate continues.

I urge you to defeat this resolution. Thank-you.

Jeff Walters
P.O. Box 82708
Fairbanks, AK 99708



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the ^{House} Judiciary Comm Hse
 Committee on SJR-42 Committee Name Dated 4/27/98
Bill / Subject

See attached

SIGNED:

S.H. Kauling
Testifier

Self
Representing

POB 84630 FLs AK 99708-4680
Address / Phone Number

TESTIMONY AGAINST SJR42

Representative Joe Green
Chair of House Judiciary Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
cc: House Judiciary Committee

P.O. Box 84680
Fairbanks, AK 99708
April 27, 1998

Dear Representative Green,

SJR 42 has brought gay bashing to a new level. Gay people throughout Alaska are having to listen to ugly, stereotypical public rhetoric against same-sex marriage. The arguments are similar to those advanced in the past against ending slavery and allowing interracial marriage. They are coming from some of the people elected to lead Alaska--not just uninformed, conservative members of the public. Most of Alaska's gay citizens are doing their jobs, following the law and being responsible members of their communities--now they must take time and energy to fight legislative discrimination against them.

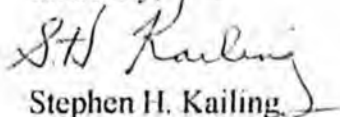
It is true that same-sex marriage has not been allowed in recent history. It may surprise you to learn that the Catholic Church performed same-sex marriages and blessed these unions between 500 A.D. and 1300 A.D. (John Boswell, "Homosexuality and Religious Life, A Historical Approach", 1989). Since then, discrimination against gays has become so pervasive in society that it is no wonder same-sex marriages were not even seriously considered until recently. To use historical attitudes and laws as an argument against denying same-sex marriage today is ludicrous.

Equally ludicrous is the argument that same-sex marriage will cheapen or make a mockery of opposite-sex marriage. Would you please explain to me how allowing a minority of Alaska's citizens the same rights, privileges and benefits as the majority will detract from my own 36-year marriage?

I have even heard members of the Senate attack the Alaska judicial system because it is telling them and their supporters what they do not want to hear. This is reminiscent of past public attitudes against equal civil rights for people of color and Alaska Natives.

At the end of this debate (if the Legislature even allows a real one), I simply ask you to do what is right--not what is popular. Nip your discriminatory legislation in the bud before it turns into an ugly leaf in the annals of Alaska's history.

Sincerely,


Stephen H. Kailing

To: All Representatives

In 1984 and again in 1996 resolutions were approved at the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association related to Ceremonies of Union between members of the same sex. The 1996 resolution states as follows, (slightly abbreviated)

BECAUSE Unitarian Universalists affirm the inherent worth and dignity of every person; and

BECAUSE marriage is held in honor among the blessings of life; and

WHEREAS The Unitarian Universalist Association has adopted numerous Resolutions over the last twenty-six years supporting equal rights for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender persons, including support for Ceremonies of Union between members of the same sex; and

WHEREAS The UUA Board of Trustees and the Unitarian Universalist Ministers Association have voted their support for the right to marry for same-sex couples;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association adopts a position in support of legal recognition for marriage between members of the same sex;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the General Assembly of the Unitarian Universalist Association urges its member congregations to take an affirmative position in support of the value of marriage between any two committed persons, whether of the same or opposite sexes, and to make those positions known in their home communities.

The Social Action Committee of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Fairbanks, in accordance with our Unitarian principles and these resolutions, supports same-sex marriages and urges our legislators to vote NO on SJR-42. Our fellowship has performed a number of Ceremonies of Union between same-sex couples and will continue offer gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender persons a spiritual home.

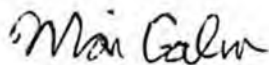
**Richard Kemnitz
Social Action Committee
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Fairbanks
P.O.Box 84734
Fairbanks, AK 99708
907-457-9009
rkemnitz@polarnet.com**

Recently, Representative Ramona Barnes said that she refuses to make second class citizens out of a group of her constituents. She was speaking of subsistence. Yet I say that if you vote for SJR-42, you are making second class citizens out of a group of constituents, is this case, Gay men and Lesbians.

Now listen to Senator Robin Taylor: "Under no circumstances will I hold office and violate [the] equal protection rights of our Constitution". Hmm, that's interesting, then why did he vote in favor of SJR-42? Senator Taylor is not willing to violate equal protection to solve the subsistence issue but he is willing to violate equal protection to deny same-sex marriage.

If we give special privileges to a minority group, such as Natives, in compensation for the land we stole, I have no problem with that. But notice this: SJR-42 gives special privileges to a majority group. And it asks the majority group to ratify these special privileges in the Constitution. This is outrageous! Equal protection is intended to protect minorities from the tyranny of the majority. SJR-42 undermines equal protection and opens the way for any majority group to give itself special rights.

SJR- 42, when compared to rest of the Constitution, is unconstitutional. The place to stop the erosion of equal protection is here, in the House Judiciary. I urge you to vote NO on SJR-42.



Mari Galereave
PO Box 212
Ester, AK 99725



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary
 Committee on SJR 42 Committee Name
 Dated 4/27/98
 Bill / Subject

Please vote no on SJR 42. This bill is divisive, and it is an inappropriate invasion of the private rights of individuals. The state has no compelling interest in this matter. I believe that this legislation is an attempt to compel adherence to religious dogma in violation of the separation of church and state. The negative consequences of this are significant and there are no benefits at all.

SIGNED:

[Signature]
 Testifier

Arthur W Brack

Self

Representing

PO Box 82533 Fairbanks, AK 99708 479-5139
 Address / Phone Number

April 27, 1998.

To: Alaska State Legislators
House Judiciary Committee

Re: SJR-42

Fr: Teresa Glendinning
2531 Linda Lane
Fairbanks, Ak. 99709

As the sister of a gay woman I ask you to vote NO on SJR42. This bill would legalize and promote discrimination and hatred in our state.



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary
 Committee on SSR 42 Committee Name Dated 4/27/98
Bill / Subject

I strongly urge you to vote NO on SSR 42
 This country was born with the concept of Religious Freedom.
 It is the responsibility of the leaders to protect the rights
 of minorities, not change the state constitution to take them
 away.
 With all the important complex issues facing this
 legislator I can not believe this obviously discriminatory
 amendment is even being considered.

I am a single woman who will probably marry a person
 of the male gender; It is none of my business or the
 states who my neighbor may chose to marry;
 I also want to avoid the negative and hateful campaigning
 that would surely result if this bill is passed.
 Please leave the constitution's ~~other~~ right to privacy alone.

SIGNED: Rowena Gross
 Testifier

Representing
321 Miller Hill Rd, Fairbanks 479-6670
 Address / Phone Number



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary
 Committee on SJR 42 Committee Name Dated 4/27/98
Bill / Subject

I am opposed to SJR 42. As a gay man I fear the hatred that would be unleashed in the months preceeding a public debate. This is a very emotional issue tinged with heavy religious overtones. I would like to use this opportunity to describe myself beyond the singular aspect of sexuality. I would like to catalog some of the things I've done in the last few years that I am most proud of. In 1990 my mother died. I took leave from my life and spent 3 months offering companionship to my father, living in his home in Buffalo, N.Y. In 1996, an acquaintance of mine who had terminal cancer, needed a place to live and die when her husband became abusive. I opened my home to her and, with other community members, hospiced her to her death. In 1997, a friend was told by her husband to leave their home of 20 years. I opened my home to her until such time as her husband was comfortable enough to share their home. My favorite civic holiday is Clean up day and I extend this day to the weeks before and after the day. I have never received a traffic citation. I wonder why I am so repugnant to some that my civil rights are denied.

SIGNED: Mark Schubauer Mark Schubauer
 Testifier
self
 Representing
P.O. Box 87 Ester AK 99725 389 2582
 Address / Phone Number

April 27, 1998

HAROLD A. HALDANE
P.O. Box 61168
Fairbanks, Alaska 99706
Telephone (907) 479-4200

'RE: Constitutional amendment to legalize homosexual marriage...

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am an expert in constitutional law. I also teach the constitution. In the true sense it would be unlawful to pass an amendment to legalize homosexual marriage for several reasons:

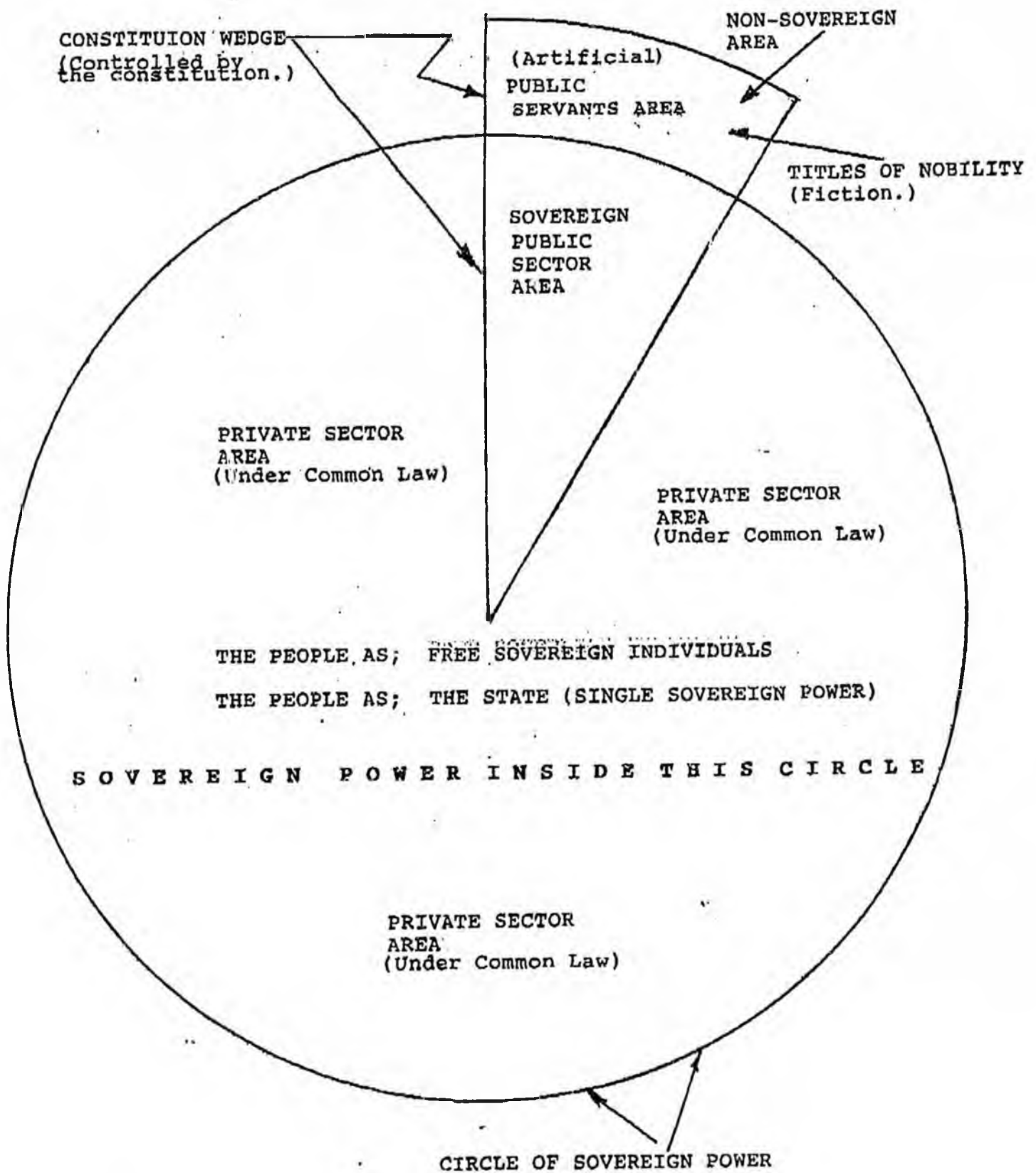
1. The constitution forbids the administrators of public government to enterfere into the private life of an American Citizen. You will never find the term "American Citizen " in the constitution. The reason for this is because "We The People" were to live under the common law which is the most perfect law ever given to man, and that the public servant was to stay the hell out of our private affairs. The reason that the people appear to be living under state and federal law is because of the influence of the "New World Order" which has been trying to overthrow the United States and the constitution since the mid 1800s, and the ignorant public servant is unaware of this.

2. This country was founded on the scriptures(Holy Bible) and the common law which we the people inherited from England since 1620. State and federal law did not come into existence until 1778 when the artificial offices were created by we the people in the constitution. The public servant was only to govern the public sector and not the private sector of the country, or state.

Homosexuality is an abomination in the sight of Almighty God. Sodom and Gamorah were destroyed in a terrible catstophe by the hand of God, because the people practised homosexuality. The people in these cities even tried to rape the angel that came to take Lot and his wife out of Sodom. Anal intercourse is called "Sodomy" and is named after the city of Sodom.

3. An amendment in it's true nature comes from the root word "amend" which means to repair. The word "addendeum" means to add on, which is forbidden by the "Supremacy Clause" of the United States constitution. (Article IV Section 2.) The legislature can only mend the constitution; it cannot add on. However the "adding" pracrtice has been going on since the beginning of the century under the influence of the New World Order, which is evil and demonic and unAmerican.

4. WHEREFORE: do not pass any law to allow homosexuality.



by Harold Haldane April 2, 1998



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Judiciary
 Committee on SJR 42 Committee Name Dated July 27-98
Bill / Subject

Please vote no on SJR 42.

Apart from anyone's personal feelings or moral convictions I do not believe the majority should ~~be~~ be deciding the constitutional rights of a minority.

I would like the option of a legal marriage to the person I have chosen to share the rest of my life with. a person with whom I have a loving, intimate, and committed relationship. ~~with~~

Let the legal system determine my constitutional right regarding marriage, not people who would impose their religious ideas against me.

SIGNED: Dr. Jean Battley
 Testifier

Representing

720 Chena Bridge Rd FDOTS AK 99709 907 479 0001
 Address / Phone Number



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary
 Committee on SJR 42 Committee Name 4-27-98
 Dated 4-27-98
 Bill / Subject

Recent history has established that it is wrong to put minority rights up for public vote. I quote Hannah Arendt German-born US political philosopher. She speaks about the Fascist Eichmann an instrument of great evil.

"The trouble with 'Heinrich' - excuse me 'Eichmann' was precisely that so many were like him, and that the many were neither perverted nor sadistic, that they were, and still are, terribly and terrifyingly normal. From the viewpoint of our legal institutions and of our moral standards of judgment, this normality was much more terrifying than all the atrocities put together."

I ask you to look through the smoke screen, realize the ramifications of this bill, destroy SJR 42. It erodes your basic rights and the basic rights of all your friends and neighbors.

Protect our Alaskan constitution, let the courts decide on this issue

SIGNED: MARILYN DAY Marilyn Day
 Testifier
Alaska voters
 Representing
PO Box 11 Eider AK 99725
 Address / Phone Number



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary

Committee on SJR 42 Committee Name House Judiciary
Dated 4-27-98

Bill / Subject

FIRST AND FOREMOST I ASK WHY SHOULD THE BASIC CONSTITUTIONAL privacy rights of all Alaskans be gutted in reaction to an ongoing court case? Face it folks when the word homosexual pop us people react emotionally. It is important that the emotional smoke screen surrounding this bill be cleared. The real question is: Should everyone's basic right to choose a life partner be mandated?

Consider Sec. 25; it reads; "the legislature may enact additional requirements related to marriage". Ask yourself what does SJR 42 Really say? Once this minority group is stripped of the constitutional right to love whom they choose, who is next? I quote, Martin Niemoller, a Protestant pastor who knows from experience when basic rights erode. He spent eight years in Nazi concentration camps. "In Germany: They first come for the Jews and I did not speak up because I wasn't a Jew. They come for the Trade Unionist and I did not speak... then they come for me and by that time no one was left to speak up."

~~stand.~~ I speak against SJR 42 it erodes your basic rights and the rights of all your friends and neighbors. Good people look thru the emotional smoke screen, rip this erosion in the building stage.

SIGNED: MARINA DAY
Testifier

People concerned about the erosion of basic rights
Representing

PO Box 11 Ester AK.
Address / Phone Number



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HJUD
~~Health, Ed, & Soc. Sec. Comm.~~
 Committee Name
 Committee on SJR 42 Dated 4-27-98
 Bill / Subject

ABOUT 20 YRS AGO Billy Crystal on Soap ~~show~~
 & said he was a HOMOSEXUAL FAGOT - AT FIRST I shocked
 my parents & I but we thought IT WAS JUST T.V. AND IT wouldn't
 effect us, But here I am ABOUT 20 YRS LATER HAVING TO TAKE TIME
 out of my work day (w/o PAY) TO TESTIFY AGAINST ^{THESE} HOMOSEXUAL, BISEXUAL,
 TRANSVESTITE ~~and~~ people who are HURTING THIS GREAT STATE.

Every Body in this Room, State, and even world are here
 because of the Union Between a man and a woman & and that
 is the way it should be!!!

IT IS MY RIGHT AS AN AMERICAN TO TESTIFY AGAINST
 HOMOSEXUAL, BISEXUAL, TRANSVESTITE ~~marriages~~, & IT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY AS
AN ALASKAN (even if it cost me in time & money). IF IT TAKES
 A CONSTITUTIONAL Amendment to STOP this waist of Time & money
 then — Lets' DO IT.

SIGNED:

Sheldon Thompson
 Testifier

myself, my children, & my grandchildren.
 Representing

162 ALLEGHENY WAY FIBKS, AK
 Address / Phone Number

99709



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Judiciary
 Committee on SJR042 Dated 4/27/98
Committee Name
Bill / Subject

I wanted to testify against SJR042
 I understand the hardship and heartfelt
 difficulty many people have in accepting Alaskans
 who happen to be gay and lesbian. I understand
 that this maybe a majority of people in todays
 Alaska.

However, lesbian and gay Alaskans do form
 life-long, loving and comitted relationships. I count
 myself lucky enough to find such a relationship
 and have celebrated it with my family and friends
 in a religious wedding ceremony. Finding a man was
 not what my family wanted for me but they have
 accepted it as making sense for me.

Changing the state constitution effectively
 criminalizes gay and lesbian Alaskans in
 perpetuity.

I respectfully ask you to oppose this imitative. For
 those of you with gay and lesbian family members and
 friends to recognize their humanity and the dignity of their
 life partnerships. For those who do not, to avoid letting this
 unfamiliarity find voice as prejudice and discrimination.

With best wishes for the remainder of this busy session.

SIGNED:

Richard Collins — RICHARD COLLINS

Testifier

Richard Collins

Representing

Box 83683
Fairbanks AK 99708 907-458-0913
 Address / Phone Number



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary
 Committee Name
 Committee on SJR 42 Dated 4/27/98
 Bill / Subject

I oppose SJR 42 because of the testimonies I have heard by those who support this bill. They were calling gays and lesbians child molesters, involved in incest & bestiality. These are outright lies based on misinformation and fear. There are many outstanding citizens in this great state of ours who happen to be gay or lesbian. They are school teachers, counselors, social workers, police officers etc. I happen to be a lesbian. And I am also a highly respected youth counselor working with severely emotionally disturbed youth. If you support this bill you will be sending a message to the families I work with and all other Alaskans that I am a "bad immoral youth counselor. This is just not true. As a youth counselor I have read hundreds of case files on children who have been molested. I have never read a case file that said the child was molested by a homosexual. Everyone of the molestation cases have reported that these kids have been molested by a heterosexual male. Either the mother's boyfriend, the step father or the child's natural father.

What about the gay and lesbian teenagers? Gay youth comprise up to 30% of all completed youth suicide. 28% of gay and lesbian youth drop out of school because of harassment at school

Gay and lesbian youth make up 25% of youth living on the streets because of harassment at home. By supporting this bill you are only going to increase those statistics. because you will be sending a message that gay and lesbian youth are bad people who do not deserve the same civil rights as everyone else. Please oppose this bill

SIGNED: Patty Kearson
 Testifier

myself
 Representing

Po Box 72268 Fairbanks AK 99707
 Address / Phone Number

451-8132



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the JUD
 Committee on SSR 42 Committee Name
 Dated 4/27/98
Bill / Subject

Why would anyone be opposed to letting the good people of Alaska vote on such a fundamental issue as ~~marriage~~ the definition of marriage?

Please forward SSR 42 to a vote of the people. Our constitution recognizes that the power is in the hands of the people of Alaska. Let the citizens have their vote on this issue that effects the very foundation of our society.

SIGNED:

Doug Ruffett
 Testifier

self - common sense
 Representing

32 Adk Ave, Fbx 99701 4521407
 Address / Phone Number



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
 Committee on SJR 42 Committee Name Dated 4-27-98
Bill / Subject

My name is Ryan Gray and I believe in the traditional, and true marriage between a man and a woman. I am against the idea and practice of Sodomite marriages because God says that it is wrong and it goes directly against the Christian foundation which America was built upon.

I believe that this issue should be put on the ballot to be brought before the people of Alaska to vote upon.

Thank-you,
 Ryan Gray.

SIGNED: Ryan Gray
 Testifier
Self
 Representing
1416 Holy Cross Dr. Fbks. AK 99709 452-4622
 Address / Phone Number

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary
Committee on SJR 42 Committee Name House Judiciary
Bill/Subject Dated 4-27-98

SIGNED: Ruth Craig
Testifier

2325 - 30th Avenue, Fairbanks, Alaska
Address/Phone Number 99701

Testimony for SJR42 4-27-98
to be included in the packet.

I am Ruth Ewig, and I like many traditional family members, believe in traditional marriage, one man and one woman which has been proven to stabilize our nation through 3 centuries of existence. Jonathan, my husband, teens and I support your efforts through SJR 42 to protect us from the courts and the aggressive sodomites that are trying to cash in on their lifestyle using our money and forcing us to agree, or crying "victim."

Marriage is universal. All cultures and all major religions honor marriage which means the bringing together of the two sexes to form families. Marriage is not only a matter of feelings, but it is the specifically defined legal, social, and economic union of a man and a woman. Homosexuals have the same right to enter into marriage with the opposite sex. Once you break the one-man, one-woman definition of marriage, there is no stopping point.

Marriage is an independently quantifiable good for society. Society has an interest in preserving and protecting the special status of marriage, regardless of religious beliefs. A society can get along without any homosexuality, but no society can get along without heterosexual marriage. This leads to chaos.

The legalization of same-sex marriages will make it easier to for two homosexuals to adopt a child because they will be meeting the marriage requirement. There is no "right" to adopt, and to create one would be contrary to the best interests of children who need to be in traditional families for stability and many reasons proven out by history.

If homosexual marriages are legalized, employers including those with strong religious beliefs, like myself, would be forced to recognize these "marriages" and to provide the same benefits as they provide to married couples such as family health benefits. This is taking away our money for the homosexuals who as a class are already better off economically than the average citizen.

Children would be taught in schools that homosexual sex is the moral equivalent of marital love. Homosexuals are demanding that society elevate homosexuality to the moral level of marriage and to the moral equivalent of heterosexuality. When they bring the law into it, they are imposing it on every single citizen.

Since the National Organization of Women now officially endorse same-sex marriage, they are pushing hard for the homosexuals in legislation. In their publication National NOW Times (1/97), the group's "Same-Sex Marriage Kit" offers members such ideas as "staging mock ceremonies on the courthouse steps, organizing rallies and delivering heart-shaped lobbying messages to legislators".

The homosexual's motive is not a matter of legality since they already live together and avail themselves of most of the practical benefits, with their prenuptial-style contracts, putting one another in their wills, making each other insurance beneficiaries, and so on. Their motive is a matter of redefining our culture, in education, popular culture, imposed on existing American traditions.

We homeschool our teens because anti-family philosophies and lifestyles are being forced on children in government schools under the veils of health and science. This is aggressively being done against us to teach against the traditional family and we are not going to conform to this aggressive anti-family intimidation, thus, homeschool or private school becomes the more expensive alternative. We have become victims of the sodomites and anti-family movements that are fighting for dominance. Our money is applied to accommodate the anti-family biases. This is wrong!

Ruth Ewig 4-27-98
2325 - 30th Ave
Fairbanks, AK 99701
Phone: 907-452-5538



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HJUD

Committee on SRS 42 Committee Name Dated 5-1-98

Bill / Subject

If you think this "Marriage" issue will stop at two sodomites living together you are crazy. Next they will want to reproduce. - The Bible says we are to reproduce after our own kind, but this is impossible for the homosexuals - therefore it must not be of God (who defined marriage in the first place). So if they want to reproduce they must adopt. - but to fully reproduce they must make their children queer. in order to do this they must force them to go against their nature and sexually abuse them. - Next they will want to legalize sexual abuse to minors. Then the next issue is to have the common business man hire them as anyone else. this is no different than forcing a day care to hire a child molester to work for them. or a banker to hire a thief.

this "Marriage" decision will affect every person in our entire nation. The people must vote. It is our job to make these decisions. Power is given to people; we just lend it to the Gov. What could possibly be wrong with allowing us to vote on such a fundamental issue as defining marriage?

SIGNED:

Gregg Clark

Testifier

Right / self

Representing

32 Adak 452-1407

Address / Phone Number

TESTIMONY AGAINST SJR42

Representative Joe Green
Chair of House Judiciary Committee
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
cc: House Judiciary Committee

P.O. Box 84680
Fairbanks, AK 99708
April 27, 1998

Dear Representative Green,

PFLAG National (with a 70,000 household membership), many other national, state, and local organizations and many individual U.S. citizens have signed the marriage resolution as follows:

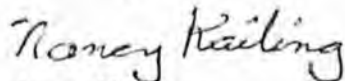
THE MARRIAGE RESOLUTION

Because marriage is a basic human right and an individual personal choice, **RESOLVED**, the State should not interfere with same-gender couples who choose to marry and share fully and equally in the rights, responsibilities, and commitment of civil marriage.

PFLAG Fairbanks has over 50 households as members and has many other fair-minded individuals as friends. We support this marriage resolution and are **AGAINST SJR 42!!**

Putting this constitutional amendment before the public will generate more hate and hurt feelings. I have seen the rhetoric put out by the Christian Coalition to support SJR 42 and it is very hurtful and insulting. I too am a Christian and resent this type of talk. If these supporters had a loved gay family member who they know to be a good, capable, giving person, I'm sure they would see this bill and the implications differently.

Sincerely,



Nancy Kailing

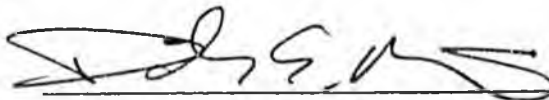
(proud mother of a lesbian daughter, retired elementary school teacher with 17 years of service in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District, UAF graduate student in Community Psychology, president of PFLAG Fairbanks, deacon in the Presbyterian Church, 21 year resident of Alaska, etc.)



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Judiciary
 Committee on SJR 42 Committee Name
 Dated 4-27-98
 Bill / Subject

I urge you to oppose SJR 42 simply because you can. As you know, the courts have not ruled on this issue, but merely asked the state to show a compelling interest NOT to allow same-gender marriage. By voting against SJR 42 you in no way vote to allow same-gender marriage. You only allow the courts the opportunity to make the whole issue go away quietly. By voting for SJR 42 you fan the flames of a highly charged issue unnecessarily. I ask you, therefore, to allow the courts to rule and avoid unnecessary divisiveness. Vote against SJR 42. Should the courts rule against the current majority, the issue can always be revisited in the next legislative session.

SIGNED:  Patrick E. Marlow
 Testifier

Representing

P.O. Box 83683, Fairbanks 99708 907-458-0913
 Address / Phone Number



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary
Committee Name
Committee on SJR-42 Dated April 27, 1998
Bill / Subject

Vote no on SJR-42.

Everyone has the right to choose their own
life partner, the one they love and want to
share responsibility with.

SIGNED:

Clara Jodwalis

Testifier

Representing

2631 Haresail Trail, Fairbanks, AK 99709

Address / Phone Number

Sarah McClellan
494 Ookpik Way
Fairbanks, AK 99709

*** **

(907) 452-2577

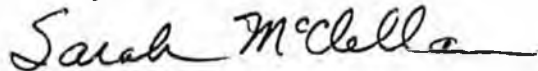
April 27, 1998

Dear Representatives,

I am against SJR-42 because it tears away Alaskans' personal rights and freedoms that are currently protected by the Alaska Constitution. Why has this bill has even come before the legislature since it its currently under consideration at a court level?

This is an emotional issue for those who are directly involved. I know this bill would hurt Alaskans that are dear to me. Please stop this bill. Let it run through the court system. Do not change our Alaska Constitution on this issue.

Thank you,



Sarah McClellan

I've heard plenty of rhetoric these past few months about the superiority of male/female relationships. That somehow society will fall apart if we recognize that love between 2 adults of the same sex is just as legitimate.

Whether recognized or not, gay and lesbian couples do love each other as deeply and remarkably as straight couples do. We fall in love, create families based on mutual consideration, respect and the desire for unity. Some of us have children. As any family, we want the best for our loved ones. We hope to provide for them in sickness and health, to protect them and nurture them. We have jobs, pay taxes, work and volunteer in our ^{churches and} communities. We get involved in our children's education. Our families face the same societal pressures as any only we experience the extra burden of homophobia and the denial of the economic and legal securities married couples take for granted. While the special rights bestowed on those who are allowed to marry are too numerous for me to articulate, our denial of them adds extra emotional and financial stress to our households. I fail to see how our burden strenghtens heterosexual marriages.

I also fail to understand how legislating this (or any) discrimination against some Alaskan families benefits the state in any way. Nontraditional Alaskan families and their children deserve the same special rights ~~that~~ ^{and protections} everyone else in this state is entitled to.

Thank you

Jennine Williamson
2454 Killarney Way
Fairbanks, AK 99709



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Senate Finance Committee
 Committee on SJR 42 Dated 7/27/98
Committee Name
Bill / Subject

Our legislature can best guide the state by providing positive policy and laws. SJR 42 is a retrograde resolution more reminiscent of Blue Laws in Eastern states which were a consequence of Puritan heritage. Alaska is a Western state whose constitution has traditionally assured more individual liberty and constitutional protection for private matters than the Federal constitution and many state constitutions.

Vital issues regarding the protection of our physical environment and subsistence and development issues, as well as adequate health care for all citizens regardless of race, sex or natural heritage ~~are~~ should be addressed directly by our governors

SIGNED:

Testifier Carolyn Peck

Representing self

622 Ridgecrest Drive

Address / Phone Number 479-0509



ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary
 Committee on SSR 42[#] Dated 4-27-98
 Bill / Subject

Dear Representatives :

I strongly encourage you to vote NO on SSR 42[#], which states that marriage can only exist between one man and one woman. for the following reasons:

- the amendment proposed by SSR 42[#] would be a disservice to the voting public of AK.
- the union of 2 people is one of love as well as many other factors, we as a state, have no business influencing & interfering in, therefore SSR 42[#] is an invasion of personal choice & privacy.
- there are many other issues needing your attention that will assist Alaskan families.
- Please vote no on SSR 42[#]

SIGNED:

Chris DeBois
Testifier

Representing

494 Oxpik way Fairbanks, Alaska 99709
Address / Phone Number

907-452-2577

April 27, 1998

Judiciary Committee
House of Representatives
State of Alaska
Juneau, Alaska

Dear Judiciary Committee

Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to provide this testimony on SJR 42.

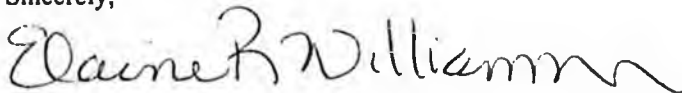
I am a sister of a Fairbanks gay woman. As a result, I have gotten to know many of the gay community here in Fairbanks, and also Anchorage and Juneau. My association with these folks has enriched my life. I feel fortunate that I have been given the opportunity to include them as my friends and Alaskan family.

I hope you will seriously consider the testimony here today and vote against this measure. I do not think the constitution should be amended that will add language of discrimination for any person or group of this state. This measure will do that if passed in the general election in November. Civil rights discrimination should not be allowed.

If this measure passes in the House of Representatives, the true ugliness will start. Are you prepared to have this issue divide the communities of this state? Already, during the senate hearings there have been many horrible things said about gay people. This not only affects the gay community but also their families and friends. What will all this hate and discrimination say to the youth of our state?

I urge you to vote no on this measure. Let the courts decide this issue.

Sincerely,



Elaine R. Williamson
P.O. Box 84811
Fairbanks, Alaska 99708

479-8241
elainew@compuserve.com

April 28, 1998

Chairman Joe Green
Representative Brian Porter
Representative Jeanette James
Representative Con Bunde

House Judiciary Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau, Alaska

Re: SJR 42

Dear Favorite Members of My Favorite Committee:

I'm so thoroughly accustomed to testifying on behalf of the State of Alaska that I'm caught quite flat-footed when it comes to speaking out as an individual. But SJR 42 is a matter of special importance to me personally and this plea is on my own behalf and on behalf of my friends, rather than for the State of Alaska.

I'm not usually at a loss for words, nor am I usually a coward, but I just couldn't make my feet walk down the hall to your committee room on Monday to testify on SJR 42. I am, however, very proud of my many wonderful friends who were able to testify and I thought you were wonderfully patient and sensitive toward all.

I would like to encourage you to vote against SJR 42. I think there are good reasons for members of the Judiciary Committee to do so.

First, this issue isn't even ripe yet. There's no need to put the citizens of Alaska through a divisive campaign with only a superior court ruling at issue. It seems hasty, at best, to seek amendments to our state constitution just because of an unpopular trial court decision.

Second, I think it is a big mistake to use the state constitution as a tool of exclusion rather than as a shield to protect the rights of minorities. Our constitution has always reflected the most noble aspirations of our leaders, rather than catering to our common fears and prejudices. It would be a sad day for Alaska if we break from that tradition now.

Third, on the merits, I think there is a good case to be made for recognizing same-sex marriages. Even fifteen years ago, I couldn't imagine such a

thing. But the fact is that between five and ten percent of our population consists of gays and lesbians -- which amounts to between 30,000 and 60,000 Alaska citizens. That's a lot of people. And many of them are in committed, long-term relationships. Far more of these than you would think have children. Either from prior marriages or because, even if they are gay, they want to be parents and raise a whole family. They adopt or, in the case of women, use sperm donors. To my mind, the reason we as a whole society want government involved in the business of marriage isn't for the privileges it confers but instead is to establish and clarify the responsibilities of the parties -- especially toward their children. Because we do have so many gays and lesbians raising families, I think it is appropriate for the state to involve itself in the relationships and address issues of custody, support, insurance, etc.

Again, however, I am mostly concerned that SJR 42 is an attempt to use the constitution for purposes of exclusion, rather than inclusion. This is extremely troublesome. Never before have we said, Oh, oh! This constitution is being used to afford protection to a group that I don't understand or support; we'd better amend it to stop that.

Normally, a vote of the people on an important issue is a good idea and should be encouraged (some might type in "subsistence" here ☺). This is not *always* true, however. The most classic example of when it shouldn't be allowed to happen is when the rights of a minority group are at issue. It's just too easy for the majority to outvote the minority. Indeed, that's why we have a constitution and three branches of government -- to balance the rights of the majority and the rights of individuals. I think it would be a mistake for our state leaders to "defer" to the majority on this issue.

Judge Pegues used to sit on the superior court bench in Juneau. I remember his remarks at one bar luncheon, when the same-sex marriage ban legislation was pending a couple of years ago. He said he'd never wish for one of his children to be gay, because it isn't an easy lifestyle, but he'd defend their right to choose it.

I also remember when I called my Dad some fifteen years ago and started our conversation by saying, "Dad, you know how you've always supported me when I've been a little out of step with others ummmm does that still hold even if I'm out of step in a big way?" He's a good man with a big heart, as well as a great mind, and it meant a whole lot to me when he flew up to Juneau to attend my commitment ceremony to a woman I loved and lived with for over a dozen years.

Even though Beverly and I split up a few years ago now, my Dad still asks after her and her children (and now her grandchildren).

Not everyone is as lucky as I've been and they've experienced hate, fear, and abuse, rather than compassion and support. I worry that putting SJR 42 on the ballot will polarize our state and provide fuel for the hate mongers. There aren't many of them in this state, but just a few can cause quite a bit of pain. It would be pretty wonderful if you could help stop that from happening.

Well, those are my thoughts. I'm sorry I didn't have the courage to come and testify, but I'm glad to be able to write to you. There's probably a lot we disagree on, and this is likely to be one of those items, but I've grown very fond of you over the course of time and am glad you're on the Judiciary Committee. I know you'll do what you think is right and I respect that.

For whatever reason, this year all my legislation skipped your committee and went straight to Finance. Tsk tsk. But I expect I'll see you around this next year!

Thank you for your time and good thoughts.

Sincerely,


Margot Knuth

Peter Otsea
215 Gastineau Avenue
Juneau, AK 99801

Senator Loren Lemman
State Capitol
Room 113
Juneau, AK 99801

April 28, 1998

Dear Mr. Lemman;

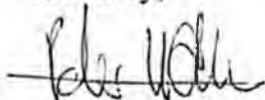
I gave testimony, a first for me, Monday, April 27 on House Bill SJR-42 to Representative Joe Green and the other representatives present. My thoughts and opposition to the bill have crystallized a little since, and I would like to share that with you.

I would like to relate some life experiences. As a boy, I was part of the school yard bully pack. I distinctly remember teasing a boy who was "different" than "us". We called him a homo. My initial reaction to that recalled instance is shame. But on reflection, our - the bully pack's - behavior was ignorance. Ignorance to the reality of differences around us and not being taught sufficiently to acknowledge those real differences.

I've grown since then and know the world is full of realisms that are out of my control. Rather than fight what is real and different, I accept and, in some cases, embrace the variety. I am married now; my wife and I have two young children. I am trying to raise them in a manner that they will not fall into the ignorance of the bully pack mentality. As an adult I will feel shameful if I fail to pass on the understanding of acceptance to my children. I've met gay and lesbian people and have become friends with some. Some have children. These people are as "normal" as you or I and deserve the same life choices as we do.

I urge you to withdraw Bill SJR-42. Any responsible adult should have the right to marry if they wish. I can not imagine you would like to be responsible for the pack behavior that is likely to result from a bill of this nature.

Sincerely,



Peter Otsea

cc: Representative Joe Green
Representative Eric Croft

ANNE L. HENRY, M.A., C.H.T.
5750 Glacier Hwy., Bldg. D, Rm. 12, Box 10
Juneau, AK 99801
Telephone: (907) 780-6345

April 28, 1998

Dear Representative Green,

Yesterday when I came home from the Senate Finance Committee hearing on my bill, I flipped on Gavel to Gavel to watch your progress in the Judiciary Committee hearing. You see, I was anxious for you to have time to talk with Melissa about the discussion of Rule 504 in the Senate Judiciary Committee minutes, and in the Finance Committee hearing. Melissa told me she would try to talk with you during a break in your hearing of SJR42.

As I sat there watching the testimony on SJR42, I kept thinking of the clients I have worked with whose lives have been so negatively touched by homophobia. Gay, straight, parents and kids. The fear of being seen as different, in any way.

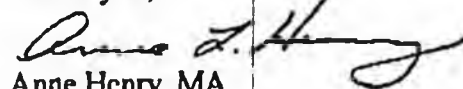
In the couples counseling that I do, the issue that I find that most divides them is their differences. So, I teach appreciation for diversity. We are all so different. Sometimes we are attracted by the differences, then as we get closer, sometimes we are repelled by them-- if we do not learn to cherish what diversity can bring to our lives.

I agree with my other colleagues who spoke against the bill. SJR42 is the kind of bill that will create a climate of hatred, fear and division, when we are just beginning to make some strides toward understanding and acceptance.

If you have already voted to pass this bill on, please consider a "NO" vote on the floor. My mother lives in Oregon where Proposition 9 was held a few years back. Some people in the hearing referred to it yesterday. I remember what happened in my family. My mother decided to vote against it because she thought it was a hateful piece of legislation. My brother-in-law began calling her to try to convince her to vote against it. The sad result of his yelling and arguing is that he and my sister hardly speak to my 77 year old mom.

This is just one story of one family. This is the kind of thing that stopping this bill will prevent. Boy, I can get riled up about this but will stop now. Please vote not to pass this bad legislation.

Thank you,


Anne Henry, MA



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary
 committee name
 committee on SJR42 , dated April 27, 1998
 bill/subject

See following page.

Signed: Michael Jones
 Testifier

Representing (Optional)

Box 6185, Sitka AK 99835

Address

747-8384

Phone No.

Many of the arguments made in support of SJR-42 have been made on the basis of religion and in the name of God. I am a Christian who OPPOSES SJR-42.

There are compelling religious arguments which could support this amendment. There are also arguments – with religious origins and overtones – which speak to the offensiveness of this proposed amendment. Whether we like it or not – the United States of America was founded largely in the quest for religious freedom. And for that reason, we have a formalized and deliberate separation between matters of the state and issues of the church.

The Bible teaches of the dangers of riches and the responsibility to distribute the wealth equally among all peoples – yet our society of classes praises and supports its capitalistic foundations. Christianity teaches us to turn the other cheek – yet we have good laws that protect a victim acting out in self-defense. Catholicism, which I practice, does not have room for divorce. Yet the rate of failed marriages is alarmingly high, and our state and our nation tolerate this legally. The Bible refers to the evils of taxes – and places tax collectors among the lowest members of a society – yet we all understand the roll of paid taxes in our state and national budgets.

To use religious arguments in this legal, governmental forum is not appropriate – no matter how strong and valid our individual religious beliefs and convictions.

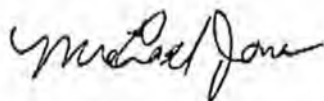
Quite simply, my opposition to SJR-42 comes down to matters of civil liberties. Within Section 1 Article 14 of the Constitution of the United States it is written: "No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States ... nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." These words are reflected in Section 1 Article 1 of the Alaska Constitution.

In 1967, the U.S. Supreme Court supported these societal rules, declaring that marriage "...is one of the basic civil rights of man(– and presumably of woman)" and that the "freedom to marry is essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness."

To quote attorney Thomas Stoddard from a New York Times editorial: "Those who argue ... that same-sex marriage would be anti-family overlook the obvious. Marriage creates families and promotes social stability ... (and) in an increasingly loveless world, those who wish to commit themselves to a relationship founded upon devotion should be encouraged, not scorned."

Recognizing that there are important and significant differences between a civil marriage and a religious marriage, I urge you to OPPOSE SJR-42.

Michael Jones
P.O. Box 6185
Sitka, AK 99835



Testimony to House Judiciary Committee regarding SJR-42; 27APR1998.

My name is Steven Jacquier and I currently reside in Manokotak. This is the second time that I have taken a personal leave day from work and flown to Dillingham to testify against this reprehensible legislation.

There are three points which I hope to make with regard to SJR-42.

First, research has established that a substantial percentage of suiciding teens are killing themselves in large part because they fear that their lives will be miserable if they turn out to be lesbigay. They fear rejection and marginalization to the point that they would rather die than face it. This bill contributes directly to fostering the climate of fear, intolerance, and marginalization which leads to suicides. SJR-42 is cruel and destructive.

Secondly, this bill seeks to define marriage as "a union between one man and one woman," but it cynically sidesteps defining what constitutes a man and what constitutes a woman. The legislation fails to define what it is to be male and what it is to be female simply because when it comes right down to it there is no rational, practical, and enforceable basis upon which to do so. Every member of the legislature received copies of scientific articles by Dr. William Beerman and Dr. Ann Sterling-Fausto explaining the ambiguities encountered when we examine carefully what constitutes a man or a woman. Is it chromosome composition (XY versus XX), as geneticists and the Olympic Committee view the situation? Is a person a man or a woman on the basis of external anatomy and internal plumbing? There are at least 5 million Americans who are neither clearly male nor female on these bases. Is a person

a man or a woman based on how they dress and behave? That is a cultural assignment of gender, irrespective of either chromosomal or anatomical sexual identity, and is practiced in many societies. Without specifically defining what constitutes a man and what constitutes a woman for the purpose of entering into the secular contract called marriage, SJR-42 is meaningless, impractical, and unenforceable -a waste of taxpayer money that will surely be struck down when tested in the courts should it pass into law.

Thirdly, how long is it reasonable to expect that people who are being marginalized, singled out, and unjustly persecuted will continue turning the other cheek to this oppression? I urge legislators to awaken regarding the genuine urgency and passion of ordinary people who are sick and tired of having pain, expense, and violence inflicted upon them by the irrational prejudices of the ignorant and by the cruel vindictiveness of the radical religious right. What is it going to take for all citizens to actually hold the equal civil rights which are constitutionally due each of us in a secular nation where church and state are separate and all citizens are constitutionally equal under the law?

Please say no to this heinous legislation, now, before this debate becomes violent.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Steve" followed by a stylized surname, possibly "Ferguson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary
committee name

committee on SSR 42 , dated April 27, 1998
bill/subject

I am in support of SSR 42. This is a nation that is supposed to be founded on the Word of God.

One nation UNDER God. We were founded on the Bible, & the Bible certainly states homosexuality is a violent sin against our God Lord and His word. How can we pass a law, and make something legal, that is so obviously wrong & unnatural? Common sense tells us that the idea of a "marriage" existing between anything other than one man and one woman is ridiculous & blatantly sinful, marriage is God's institution and I would be afraid & ashamed to give such a wrong "relationship" the holy place & title of marriage. Man has no authority to change what God established, once & for all.

Signed: William Essary
Testifier

Representing (Optional)

Po Box 2178, Valdez, AK 99686
Address

(907) 835-5920
Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House judiciary
committee name

committee on SJR 42, dated Monday, April 27, 1998.
bill/subject

I AM IN Support of SJR 42. It is A SHAME that AMERICA IS FALLING FURTHER AND FURTHER INTO the CONDITION that it is. IT GRIEVES MY SOUL AND HEART that the possibility of A legally recognized "homosexual marriage" would even be CONSIDERED IN this NATION. It is AN Abomination to God, (who, by the way, IS supposed to be the foundation FOR this country) AND it IS A great SHAME to the SOCIETY OF MANKIND. The Reason America grew AND prospered so greatly when it WAS founded WAS because GOD WAS most important, AND honored, AND Feared. IF AMERICA continues to operate AND Rule without the FEAR OF GOD AND holiness She has lost, We will most ASSUREDLY lose the FAVOR OF GOD, AND will FALL INTO IRREVERSABLE destruction. please do something to Keep ALASKA Right. THANK you.

Signed: Rhoda G. Ewary
Testifier

Representing (Optional)

PO Box 2178

Address

(907) 835-5920

Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

SJR 4

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HJUD
committee name
 committee on SJR 42 , dated 4/27/98
bill/subject

I support SJR 42
 if God wanted a same sex marriage he might have made Adam & Adam or Eve & Eve Even the animals know its unnatural, you dont see them having same sex ~~partners~~ partners. ~~After~~
 After all the laws that are in place today are from the Bible with few exceptions of man made laws. Lets not have another man made law such as this same sex marriage. And dont pass the buck please.

Thank-You

Signed: *Darlene Pharo - Surijan*
 Testifier

Your makey
 Representing (Optional)

P.O. Box 3020 Valdez, AK. 99686
 Address

835-4275
 Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HJUD
committee name
 committee on SJR 42, dated 4-27-98
bill/subject

I would like to be identified with those who wish to put the issue of definition of marriage to rest.

I want to ^{see} this issue brought to a public vote so that our state constitution defines marriage traditionally as one man and one woman.

This value needs to be set in stone so that one person can not affect it.

Signed: Edward A. Varner
Testifier
Traditional family values
Representing (Optional)
P.O. BOX 3107 VALDEZ, AK 99686
Address
835-2708
Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HATUD
committee name
 committee on SJR42, dated 4-27-98
bill/subject

I'm A 24 year old Single Male, No
 Kids, I feel that The Gay Community
 Is plaguing us with there Filth.

I am totaly against the Bill of same
 Sex marriage. I would like my Future wife
 and Kids to grow up in a clean, pure
 world. Thank You,

Signed: Kenn D Varnes
Testifier
United States of America
Representing (Optional)
P.O. Box 3078 Valdez AK 99686
Address
835-3927
Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HJUD
 committee name
 committee on SJR 42, dated 27 Apr 98
 bill/subject

I FEEL STRONGLY THAT THE
 DEFINITION OF MARRIAGE INCLUDES
 HUSBAND (MALE) AND WIFE (FEMALE) ALREADY.

I SUGGEST THAT THE HOMOSEXUAL COMMUNITY
 RETIRE, CAUCUS, AND COME BACK WITH ANOTHER
 TEAM FOR THEIR UNION. THE WORD
 MARRIAGE ALREADY HAS A MEANING.

Signed: James Boyd Butler
 Testifier

Representing (Optional)
P. Box 945 VALDEZ, ALASKA 99686
 Address
(907) 835-2501
 Phone No.

4/27/98

Honorable Joe Green, Chair
House Judiciary Committee
Capitol Room 120
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Green and members of the House Judiciary Committee

Please do not pass SJR 42 (Fin), Proposing an amendment to the Constitution of the State of Alaska relating to marriage from your committee. Please do not support this resolution.

I am a heterosexual, married woman but I believe in sexual tolerance. Same sex relationships, including marriages should be recognized in our state. I believe this resolution is contentious and divisive. I do not think our State Constitution should be changed to define marriage.

Please add my opposition to this resolution to your committee in your committee minutes. Thank you

Sincerely,



Nancy Hemenway
726 Basin Road
Juneau, AK 99801



Nome Legislative Information Office
Office - (907) 443-5555 Fax - (907) 443-2162

TO: House Judiciary Committee

ATTN: _____ FAX: _____ PHONE: _____

FROM: NOME LIO PHONE: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: 7 pages of written testimony - originals
will be mailed.

SENT: Date 4/28 Time _____

NUMBER OF PAGES: 7 (NOT counting cover sheet)

TRANSMITTED BY: Beck



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
 committee name
 committee on SJR 42, dated 4-22-98
 bill/subject

I am writing to say that I am against
 the SJR 42

I am a licensed, clinical social worker and a member of NASW - National Association of Social Workers. I have a duty to advocate in support of my clients and future clients as a clinician to aid against discrimination due to sexual orientation.

Sen. Lemans proposal bill is directly opposed to the kind of legislature that NASW members support.

Signed: Julie Whittaker LCSW JULIE WHITTAKER
 Testifier

MYSELF
 Representing (Optional)

PO Box 2036 Nome, AK 99762
 Address

907-443-7188
 Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
 committee name
 committee on SJR 42, dated 4/27/98
 bill/subject

To whom it may concern -

I strongly oppose any bill that would ban same sex marriages in Alaska. Marriage is an institution where two people who love each other make a life-long commitment. I see no reason why the two people can't be of the same sex. I am a happily married heterosexual but have good friends who are homosexual. Our friends are a wonderful couple, marvelous human beings and great parents. These folks deserve to be married as much as the next couple. Please, please do not pass this bill. It would be a sad step backwards for human rights.

Signed: Leiza Johnson LEIZA JOHNSON
 Testifier
myself
 Representing (Optional)
Box 1773, Nome 99762
 Address
907/ 443-4145
 Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
 committee name
 committee on SJR 42, dated 4/27/98
 bill/subject

I am vehemently opposed to any proposed legislation banning same sex marriages. I am a happily married heterosexual with a wonderful wife and two wonderful children. I believe that marriage is an institution where two people make a commitment for a lifelong relationship. It has been my experience that our friends in same sex relationships have in general had much healthier + happier relationships than many of our friends in heterosexual relationships. I believe it would be a crime to pass any legislation making it illegal for two people to make a legal commitment to a lifelong relationship just because they are the same sex.

Signed: Paul H. Johnson RDS PAUL H. JOHNSON, DDS
 Testifier

Myself
 Representing (Optional)
P.O. Box 1773
 Address
(907) 443-4145
 Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
committee name
 committee on SJR 42 , dated 4/27/98
bill/subject

I am against bill SJR 42 and I feel that it should be a Supreme Court decision. It is a civil rights issue & should be dropped or passed through the proper Judicial manor. I do not feel as if this should be a decision for Senator Lemmon, to make for himself.

Signed: Leah Barnes LEAH BARNES
Testifier
My self
Representing (Optional)
P.O. Box 1725 Nome AK 99762
Address
(907) 443-7635
Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
 committee name
 committee on STR 42, dated 4-27-98
 bill/subject

I'm totally against bill STR 42. No one
 has the right to play "GOD", and make
 such a decision. Gay + Lesbian are people
 too. Lets start treating them a such.

Gloria Eaton

Signed: *Gloria Eaton* GLORIA EATON

Testifier

Self

Representing (Optional)

PO BOX 211 NOME, AK 99762

Address

N/A

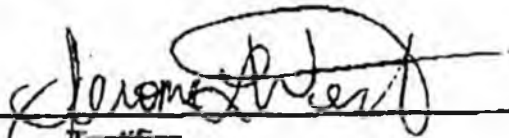
Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
committee name
 committee on STR 42, dated 4/27/98
bill/subject

I'm totally against bill STR42!
 I feel Gay's & Lesbian's are people
 also! They should have all the
 same rights as everyone else! Thank
 you!

Signed:  JEROME L. WEST
Testifier

Representing (Optional)
Box 997 Nome AK 99762
Address

Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary Committee
committee name
 committee on SJR 42 , dated 4/27/98
bill/subject

I would like to register that I am against SJR-42.

As a member of the Nat'l Assn. of Social Workers, I am against all forms of discrimination including discrimination due to sexual orientation.

Sen. Leman's proposed bill is directly opposed to the kind of legislation that NASW members support.

We are all obligated to protect the equal rights of all persons.

Signed: E. Holly Aldrich E. HOLLY ALDRICH
Testifier

Self
Representing (Optional)

P.O. Box 2071 Nome, AK 99762
Address

907.443.4635
Phone No.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the

HJUD

committee name

committee on

5JR 42

bill # / subject

dated

4/27/98

As a resident of the State of Alaska for the past 24 years, I am proud of the way we have handled our concerns within our borders.

All Alaskans have a right to be heard and vote on issues that touch our daily lives. I believe we should have the right to vote on 5JR 42, that is, if the legislature will allow us.

We do not want the ignomy of being the state that allowed one judge to decide the fate of our culture and communities. Marriage cannot be redefined anymore than a person can redefine their gender.

We do not want our state to approve or promote the lifestyle of homosexual marriages. Homosexuals are free to live however they want, but we should not publicly give them the benefits of a relationship that is based on natural & moral law. Our country has thrived & been blessed because we do have a strong history of making wise choices.

Besides being known for 1960s oil & the Permanent Fund we do not want to be known as the state to lead the disastrous way of changing the status quo.

Please vote YES on 5JR 42 & help preserve the fundamental definition of marriage. Our country, our families & our children are counting on you to let us decide, not one elected

Signed:

Ruth A. Henry

JUDGE.

Testifier

Representing (Optional)

1121 Walnut Kenai, AK 99611

Address

283-3897

Phone number

SJR-42

My name is Ric. Plate. I have been an active voter for more than 20 years

I wish to speak in support of SJR-42.

This bill does not in its self establish a law or constitutional amendment, nor does it establish or prohibit homosexual marriages.

This bill does the right thing by allowing the public the opportunity to vote on this issue.

A small percentage of the population of Alaska should not decide a matter this important to the people of Alaska, whether it be the Alaska State Legislature, homosexual advocate rights groups, or even those who have taken the time to write letters, send P.O.'s or email messages. Defeating this bill would only serve to silence the people.

An issue this important should be decided by the majority of Alaskans. I believe a constitutional amendment is needed to establish that marriage exists between one man and one woman.

Why a constitutional amendment? Because

It would end the debate about homosexual marriages, one way or the other. It would establish a law for the judicial system to enforce, rather than re-interpret the will of the people, re-write or throw out as unconstitutional.

Most importantly, the people of Alaska would have the opportunity to speak.

Thank you for the chance to speak in support of SJR-42.

Mary I. Mussman
373 W. Vine Ave
Soldotna AK 99669
907-262-3937

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

Senate Joint Resolution 42
Juneau AK

Dear Chairman Joe Green, Representatives Con Bunde, Jeanette James, Brian Porter,
Norman Rokeberg, Ethan Berkowitz, and Eric Croft

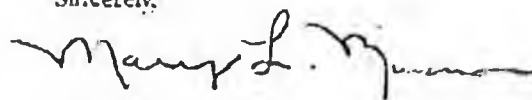
We, the undersign, are writing the committee to inform you we are expressing our strong support of SJR 42. We wish for it to pass and be placed on the November ballot to give all Alaskans the opportunity to vote on preserving the traditional "one man, one woman" definition of marriage. A vote against SJR 42 is a vote against allowing Alaskans to decide this issue for themselves. Polls show that 70 percent of Alaskans are opposed to homosexual "marriage." We deserve a chance to decide this issue.

Judge Peter Michalski made a mistake when he ruled on Feb. 27 that Alaska's "one man, one woman" definition of marriage may be unconstitutional. No other court in the United States has ever found that a person's right to privacy gives them the power to force the state to publicly recognize homosexual relationships. SJR 42 will give voters a chance to overrule Judge Michalski's dangerous opinion. No other state in the U.S. recognizes homosexual "marriage." No other country in the world recognizes homosexual "marriages." If Alaska legalized homosexual marriage it will place our state in conflict with the laws of all other states and every country in the world.

The federal government defines marriage as a union of "one man and one woman." All three members of Alaska's congressional delegation supported the bill creating this federal law, and President Clinton signed it into law. This definition is binding on all federal agencies and is controlling for more than 3900 sections of federal statutes and regulations that use the word "marriage" and spouse.

All SJR 42 will do is preserve what we have now: the "one man, one woman" definition of marriage. This has been the definition throughout Alaska's history as a Territory and State. It is not right for one unelected judge to change the definition of marriage that we have always lived under, without the approval of Alaska's people.

Sincerely,



MARY I. MUSSMAN



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the Judiciary committee name

committee on SJR-42, dated 4-27-98
bill # / subject

I am in favor of SJR 42

Marriage defined in four dictionaries written between 1828 and 1990 including Black's Law dictionary states specifically that marriage is a legal union between one man and one woman. Choosing a 'life partner' may be a right, however legal marriage requires a state license so therefore is not a right but a privilege.

Unfortunately we have to defend the obvious. I am grateful for the pursuit of this amendment to our constitution for the sake of clarity if nothing else.

* Dictionaries

- Noah Webster - 1828
- Merriam-Webster 1956
- Merriam-Webster - 1983
- Black's Law Dict. - 1990

Signed: Elizabeth Perry
Testifier

Representing (Optional)

Box 3514 Soldotna, AK 99669
Address

262-9740
Phone number



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the HJUD
committee name

committee on SJR # 42, dated April 27 98.
bill # / subject

+ my beliefs are based on God's Holy Bible. God Created Adam and Eve not Adam and Steve. (Genia: 21-25)

+ I am not homophobic I have some friends that are Gay. I believe you should love the sinner and hate the sin. I am married and have 3 kids. I believe that if people are given the freedom to marry same sex then what next?

+ we need to get back to basics and what America was founded on and that is the word of God - the Bible

Signed: Sheryl Dee Main
Testifier

Self
Representing (Optional)

207 Walker Kenai, AK 99611
Address

283-5296
Phone number



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the ~~House~~ HJUD
committee name

committee on SJR 42, dated 04/27/98

This is not ABOUT CIVIL RIGHTS ^{bill # / subject} ITS ABOUT HONORING MARRIAGE AS ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN. I'M HERE TODAY AS SOMEONE WHO IS VERY SAD. I NEVER THOUGHT THIS WOULD BE OR EVER BECOME AN ISSUE. THAT WE WOULD HAVE TO PLEAD WITH OUR STATE OFFICIALS OVER SUCH AN ISSUE AS SJR 42. I LOVE THIS COUNTRY AND I'M SO PROUD OF HER THAT I GAVE 4 YEARS OF MY LIFE TO THE MILITARY DURING THE VIETNAM ERA AND WAS READY TO GIVE MY LIFE FOR HER. OUR FINE FATHERS FOUND THIS NATION AND GAVE THEIR LIVES FOR HER - THEY SO MUCH BELIEVED IN GOD THAT THEY PUT IT ON OUR CURRENCY (IN GOD WE TRUST) BUT HOW CAN WE SAY WE TRUST IN GOD AND ~~NOT~~ THEN WE WANT TO CHANGE HIS WORD TO SATISFY OUR IMMORAL ACTIONS. ~~THIS IS NOT AN ALTERNATE LIFESTYLE AS SOME WOULD SAY BUT AN SIN ISSUE. WE CAN SEE HOW GOD HAS BLESSED NATIONS WHO SERVED HIM AND THEN RECEIVED JUDGMENT WHEN THEY TURNED THEIR BACK ON GOD. IF WE PERMIT ~~ANY~~ SOME SEX MARRIAGES THEN WE OUR VIOLATING GOD'S LAWS AND WILL REAP THE CONSEQUENCES. GOD HAS BLESSED TO ALASKA BECAUSE THERE ARE ACROSS THIS STATE GOD FEARING MEN & WOMEN WHO PRAY FOR OUR LEADERS & FOR OUR LAND. AS A DAD I'M LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING MY GIRLS GROW UP AND HAVE A HUSBAND & CHILDREN OF THEIR OWN. THAT WILL MAKE ME A PROUD GRANDFATHER. IN THE BEGINNING GOD CREATED MAN AND WOMAN AND TOLD THEM TO GO OUT AND MULTIPLY THE EARTH. IF THIS HAD NOT HAPPENED NONE OF US WOULD BE HERE TODAY. I SPEAK THIS AS ONE WHO LOVES THE LORD GOD WHO READS THE BIBLE, BELIEVES IN IT & LIVES BY IT. PLEASE KEEP MARRIAGE AS GOD INTENDED ONE MAN AND ONE WOMAN. LET US ALL REPENT OF OUR UN-GODLY WAY SO HE WILL HERE FROM HEAVEN, FORGIVE US AND HEAL OUR LAND. YES TO SJR 42!~~

Signed: *Ernest J. [Signature]*
 Testifier
Self & All God's Children in Alaska
 Representing (Optional)
P.O. Box 393 STANLING, AK 99672
 Address
(907) 262-8821
 Phone number



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary committee name

committee on SJR 42

dated 4-27-98

Thank you for allowing me to speak on this important issue.

My name is Carol Wherry. My husband, Tony, and I have lived in Alaska for 15 years and have just celebrated our 35th wedding anniversary. We have 2 children and 5 grandchildren.

I fully support the constitutional amendment introduced by Sen. Loren Leman to write the traditional definition of marriage into the state constitution.

The sacred bond between man and woman has been since time began for the sake of bringing forth new life which a same sex marriage cannot give. Society has a stake in this issue because it is through preservation that new members will arise and insure its perpetuation.

Laws regulating the continued of marriage enable the creation of a stable institution where a loving mother & father bring up a healthy contributing individual. Alaska putting their stamp of approval upon homosexual activity does not encourage moral greatness, but simply more

Signed: Carol Wherry Testifier
... give us the people a chance to vote on this issue

Representing (Optional)

1528 Steeler Dr. Kenai, Ak 99611

Address

283-7772

Phone number

April 28, 1998

Dear Representative Green,

This letter once again concerns SJR 42 (which by now, you may or may not be tired of hearing about!) I still support this proposed constitutional amendment and ask that you also support it.

Upon further reflection of some of the statements that asked you to let this amendment die in committee, several more thoughts came to mind. One argument I heard over and over was that we should just let the courts decide this case and not the people. I wonder if these people realize that in 1986, the **Supreme Court** upheld the power of states to even **outlaw** homosexuality in the case of *Bowers v. Hardwick*, 478 U.S. 186 (1986). This ruling was not even about same-gender marriage, but had to do with the act of homosexuality itself.

Some of these same opponents of SJR 42 who just wanted the courts to decide, also compared not granting homosexuals marriage rights to allowing slavery to continue as status quo. Slavery in the early days of America was wrong, and I'm thankful that it wasn't allowed to continue! However, comparing the two is absurd. First of all, it wasn't the court system at all who put an end to slavery, and in fact, the Supreme Court originally ruled that slavery was constitutional (thankfully they later reversed this decision). Furthermore, it was a **constitutional amendment** that once and for all did away with slavery (Amendment 13)! So does that mean that it's okay to have the people vote only when it serves the best interest of a particular group? It seems to be a rather twisted view of democracy.

Thanks for letting me express some of these thoughts, and I do thank you for your time and consideration of these matters as you weigh the various testimonies on SJR 42. I hope you will give it your support.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Chris Schuler
4066 Deborah Drive
Juneau, AK 99801

I for one have had enough, I will not stand by and watch the Federal wedge be pounded further into the heart of Alaska. My support goes to those who are willing to set aside ridged ideologies, act creatively and bring Alaskans back together.

Alaska's vastness and her valuable wildlife resources have created tremendous ways of life that are not available any other place on earth. This, coupled with an equally diverse cultural landscape make living here and creating the proper resource allocation process much more complex than any of us would like. However, it can be accomplished; but not with the Federal mauling we must live with as ANILCA is currently written. This will not be easy; nothing worth doing is. In order to get to the middle, some large bits of pride will have to be swallowed along with a little crow by those who find themselves on opposite ends of the spectrum.

The Constitution of the State of Alaska is beyond a doubt a fine piece of work and changing it to allow for an ill conceived Federal Law does not set well with many of us. However, the complexities of the allocation process as well as social considerations beg for some changes somewhere and the fact is, most people in Alaska want to be heard; they want to make a choice. So, if it takes a vote by Alaskans to allow for a priority based on a creative, well thought out plan, that can bring us back together; isn't that much better than being force fed a priority based on a plan that has proven itself to be one we can not live with?

Those Alaskans that carry a copy of that constitution next to their heart and steadfastly refuse to accept the idea of letting the voters make a choice need to look inside themselves and decide if it is worth it to force Alaska through the Federal knot hole just to prove they were right.

But this coin has two sides. Those Alaskans that have been given the Federal ride the recipients of the priority need to search their souls as well. There have been tremendous abuses carried out under the name of subsistence with the sanction afforded by the Federal system. Those "rural residents" who take full advantage of the system either to expand their personal freedoms or garner political power, knowing full well they are acting beyond the intent of the law have severely muddied the water, creating conflict where none existed before ANILCA and in the process, destroying the much deserved credibility of Alaska's true subsistence users.

An "equitable" solution means extremists on each side must give, and the time to do so is now. As Alaskans, we must all strive to understand this complicated mess, make informed suggestions to our Legislators and act this year to put this devisive monster behind us.

Rob Holt

Rob Holt, President
Alaska Professional
Hunters Association-
an organization of Alaska's Guides
907-733-2723

HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE TESTIMONY
April 27, 1998

Present, but
had to leave
😊

My name is Marsha Buck and I am here to ask you to OPPOSE SJR 42. I am the current co-chair of PFLAG Juneau. PFLAG stands for Parents, Families, and Friends of Lesbians and Gays. I am active in PFLAG because I have a bisexual daughter who is married, in eyes of her church and in the eyes of our family, to a woman.

I am opposed to SJR 42 for many reasons, but let me share only one of those with you today. To be honest, I am frightened about what could happen to young people like my daughter if this resolution is put to a vote of the people. I know many of you don't agree with same sex marriage and that is really OK with me because differences of opinion are not a problem for us in our democracy and in Alaska. But putting a divisive issue like this on the ballot so that people who are not as well informed or as even tempered as you are about discrimination issues, about the separation of church and state, and about the use of discourse instead of violence to resolve debate, could put us in the position that Oregon and Colorado have been in recently when ballot measures came up for a vote there and gays, lesbians, bisexuals and their allies were harassed, threatened, injured, and even killed.

This does not need to happen in Alaska. This issue does not need to come before the voters right now. There is no hurry that makes this a crucial issue for this legislature or for you personally right now. This a time to be patient and see what happens in the courts, and if it doesn't go the way you think is appropriate then there is time to offer alternatives that are well thought through and appropriate. Our daughters and sons, your grandchildren or nieces and nephews perhaps, don't need to be sacrificed now by a hasty vote to proceed with this resolution. You are reasonable people who can say NO for now so that you can save pain and suffering now and deal with this issue calmly and clearly when the courts are finished and the time is right.

Please do not send SJR 42 out of this committee.

Marsha Buck
8445 Kimberly St.
Juneau, AK 99801
789-6167

Marsha Buck

Testimony of Susan Phillips
1760 Evergreen Avenue
Juneau, Alaska 99801
(907) 463-2695

Susan had
to leave,
but was
here

April 27, 1998

Good afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of this committee, for the opportunity to testify. My name is Susan Phillips.

I am a heterosexual. I am telling you that for two reasons. First of all, because I want to tell you that I didn't choose to be a heterosexual. It just happened that one day, I started chasing boys, not girls, around my elementary school playground. I no more chose to be a heterosexual than gay men and lesbians choose to be homosexual. We are the way we are. I am also telling you about my sexual preference to let you know that it is not only homosexuals who are opposed to SJR 42.

I am not married. But if I wanted to get married, there is nothing, except for a stubborn boyfriend, stopping me from doing so. But if SJR 42 were passed by this Legislature, and the voters of this state, my gay and lesbian friends would be Constitutionally denied the opportunity to legalize their choice of a life partner.

It is not right to deny the opportunity to marry to certain people, just because they have same-sex partners.

Our Constitution, in Article One, Section One, says that "...all persons are equal and entitled to equal rights, opportunities, and protection under the law..."

I recently had the pleasure of seeing an exhibit here in Juneau. It was entitled, "Love Makes a Family" and was on display at the Federal Building, the Nugget Mall, and the University of Alaska Southeast several months ago. The exhibit featured photographs and text depicting families with gay and/or lesbian members. Some families were lesbian couples and their children. Other exhibits portrayed gay male couples with their children. Still others showed people my parents' age with their grown children, some of whom were gay or lesbian.

When I thought about what I was going to say this afternoon, I kept thinking back to the title of that exhibit: Love Makes a Family. Why deny the right of adults who love one another to marry? Everyone in this room seems to understand and agree upon the importance of families. It only makes sense to expand, not contract, the definition of 'family'.

The times, they are a'changin'. It used to be that "family" meant a mother, father, and children, who all lived together. Now we have divorces, remarriages, blended families, stepparents, stepchildren, adoptions, and single-parent families. What's next? Are we going to narrow the definition of "family" to mean only the traditional nuclear family?

I also want to say that I am shocked at the number of proposed Constitutional amendments before this Legislature. It seems that a new one is introduced every week. A BASIS print-out shows about ^{40 to} fifty proposed Constitutional amendments before this Legislature. I wish that the Legislature had more respect for our Constitution than to propose amending it every time an Alaska judge makes a ruling with which a legislator does not agree.

On that note, I think that it is premature to address a proposed Constitutional amendment when the court case prompting it has not yet made its way through the courts.

I was able to watch part of the Senate floor debate on SJR 42 a couple of weeks ago. During that debate, some hateful things were said, particularly by one Anchorage senator, about gay and lesbian Alaskans. I could not help but think that those hateful comments were just a preview of coming attractions. If SJR 42 passes the House and goes before the voters of this state in November, many hateful things will be said in the campaign before the election. Please stop this legislation in its tracks, and do not bring about an ugly and divisive campaign in our state.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify against SJR 42.

Please vote against SJR 42.

Thank you.



Alaska State Legislature

Please enter into the record my testimony to the House Judiciary
committee name
 committee on SJR 42, dated 4/27/98.
bill/subject

Please vote against this bill.
 As a member of an unpopular group, ^{life} can be challenging enough in the bush. Bills such as this one seem to legitimize discrimination. The 5th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution already requires Equal Protection.

Rather than what you might perceive as the easy thing, please do the right thing. Yes, other countries have.

Signed: Kim Mack [Kim Mack]
 Testifier

Representing (Optional)
Box 249 / Barrow [AK 99723]
 Address
852-6465
 Phone No.

[LHO will mail hard copy down to Comm. today.]

League of Women Voters of Alaska
1542 East 27th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99508 - Phone/Fax: 272-0366

FAX TRANSMITTAL -- One page

April 27, 1998

The Honorable Joe Green
Alaska State Legislature
State Capitol (MS 3100)
Juneau, AK 99801-1182
FAX (907) 456-4316

Dear Representative Green:

The League of Women Voters of Alaska urges you to oppose SJR-35.

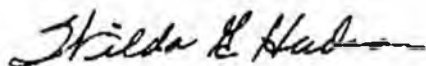
The Constitution of the state of Alaska is one on the newest state constitutions and is considered a national model document. It has served our state well through the years.

The League is extremely concerned about legislative resolutions which propose amendments to the Alaska Constitution that limit citizens' rights to privacy and individual liberties. We believe these resolutions are in conflict with Article I, Sections 1, 3 and 22 of the Alaska Constitution as currently written.

Leagues members throughout the state respectfully request that you protect the integrity of the Alaska Constitution and not clutter it up with amendments that do not serve well the interest of all our citizens.

The League believes that SJR-35 should not be passed out of the Legislature. Again, your vote in opposition to SJR-35 is requested and will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely yours,



Wilda G. Hudson, President
League of Women Voters of Alaska

April 27, 1998

Dear Representative Green,

This letter concerns SJR 42, a real "hot topic" lately. I was unable to attend the hearing in the Judiciary Committee today, but did watch and listen to some of the testimonies on television.

I do wholeheartedly support SJR 42 and found difficulties with some of the testimonies that were given opposing it, in particular the argument that church and state should be separated and that this bill was trying to legislate morals. This amendment contains no wording about God, no wording about the Bible, no wording about morality, and no wording declaring that homosexuality is wrong. As I read and understand it, this amendment simply defines what may and may not be termed as legal "marriage." Because one defines what marriage always has been and is, is that mixing religion and government?

Now I suppose that by declaring that one kind of marriage is legal (heterosexual) and that the other (homosexual) is illegal, it sends the message to society in general that one marriage is moral and the other is immoral. Opponents of SJR 42 do not want morals legislated to them, but whether they like it or not, morals govern most of our laws and our society. Morality governs the laws that say "No, it's not okay for one person to go kill another," or "No, it's not okay for someone to go steal from someone else, even if that other person has lots of wealth and can spare some," or even "No, it's not okay to go walking down the street stark naked." If opponents do not want morals legislated to them, then I think that's even more reason to allow the people of Alaska to vote on what definition of marriage they want to live with!

Please give SJR 42 your support. Thanks so much for persevering through this volatile topic.

Respectfully yours,

Mrs. Chris Schuler
4066 Deborah Drive
Juneau, AK 99801

RANDY M. OLSEN

1209 Skyline Drive

Fairbanks, Alaska 99712

(907) 457-8939

e-mail: Olsens@mosquito.net.com

April 23, 1998

Re: SJR 42

I wanted to write a reasoned support for SJR 42, the call for an amendment defining marriage in Alaska as between one man and one woman. I start my comments with 3 governing principles:

First, there may be some who oppose any limiting definition. However, even those opposing the resolution would agree that a "marriage" between a dog and a human should not be legally recognized. Similarly, a "marriage" between an adult and a 5-year-old child would not be countenanced. Once it is recognized that some limitations are desirable and required, then the next consideration is where to draw the line.

Second, It is absurd to claim that the state has no interest in family structures and relationships. The state budgets millions of dollars each year in state social programs to try to remedy problems created by faulty relationships. The state's efforts in social programs, adult protective services, children in need of aid, child support enforcement, and youth corrections are examples. The impact of family life on education has been well documented, and the state government is unquestionably involved in the education of Alaska children. Family structures and relationships are topics which the state government unavoidably must be concerned with, to be able to have any hope of dealing with the social problems the government routinely addresses.

Third, besides each natural person possessing rights of citizenship, the state government has found it useful to also recognize and give legal identity to certain associations of people: business corporations and partnerships, political subdivisions, fraternal organizations, etc. These legally identifiable entities promote societal order and commerce. When disruptive the state government may cancel charters and disband associations which it has previously recognized. Marriage licenses issued by the state, and then divorce orders, are government actions which recognize and then revoke marriage associations. The control of marriages is already a government function.

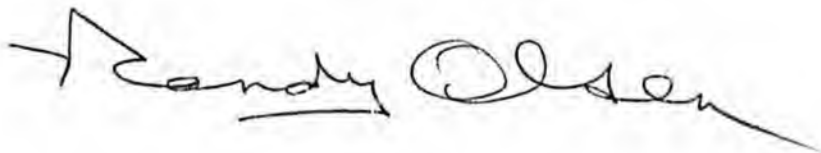
After considering these principles, I urge adoption of the resolution which would permit a vote for an amendment which would define marriages as between one man and one woman. This resolution addresses the legal definition of a legally recognized association. It does not in any way limit private conduct, but is concerned with government sanctioning of particular marriage associations.

To recognize any other definition of marriage would be to legally recognize polygamy (multiple spouses, either one woman with multiple husbands, or one husband, with multiple wives), homosexual relationships, and unimaginable combinations. This scenario would make Alaska the destination of every person seeking legal recognition for every possible non-traditional marriage form. Some would stay, and prove disruptive of our social order, while others would return to other states, and insist that their home states give recognition to their Alaska "marriage". Either way we have chaos and, from the research, a multitude of new social problems arising out of non-traditional marriages.

My wife and I have 8 children, and we donate a large part of our resources and time to youth sports, boy scouts and girl scouts, and school activities. In each of these we find ourselves filling the needs of children who are without a mother or father in their lives. These kids are messed up and need a lot of help. Further confusion by tampering with the traditional definition of marriage so as to further disrupt the traditional home structure is unconscionable.

It is unavoidable that the adoption of the resolution will be seen by some as imposing a social order or making a judgment call as for what is best for Alaskans. Every statute, however, whether it be related to a plumbing code, drunk driving law, etc., operates the same way. The Legislature is in the *business* of making decisions which affect the quality of life for Alaskans. Because it must be interested in family relationships and structures, the Legislature should conclude that there is great reason to promote the traditional family structure, and absolutely no reason to abandon the traditional family structure.

Please support the resolution.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Randy Olsen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

April 26, 1998

Dear Representative Green,

I am writing to ask you to support SJR 42 and to urge your fellow Representatives to support it as well.

It just amazes me that the special interests behind this homosexual marriage idea want our State of Alaska to be the first State in the first country in this entire world to change the definition of marriage.

And they want you, our elected Representatives, to deny the rest of us Alaskans the right to our ballot voice on the matter.

I know that these people are my fellow Alaskans and some may be friends. Some of them probably buy halibut and crab from me in the summer. Nevertheless, they have made a wrong moral choice to pursue the homosexual lifestyle. I'll still remain friends with them but I don't want their social experiment to start in Alaska without a democratic vote of the people.

I believe that homosexuals want some of the same privileges that come from a legal marriage contract such as insurance benefits. But even more they want society to say their moral choice is 'ok' by being promoted and elevated to legal marriage.

Please don't remove our democratic rights by allowing this extreme change to occur without a vote of the people.

Sincerely,



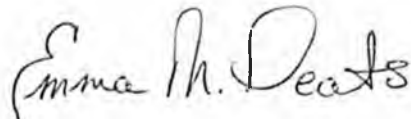
Ted Deats
PO Box 87
Juneau, Alaska 99802
463-3262

April 27, 1998

Dear Representative Joe Green,

I feel marriage should remain as the Creator of marriage designed it---one man and one woman legally joined together. Any variation of this definition would be contradictory to natural law and lead to chaos within the social structure of our state.

At the very least, Alaskan voters should be allowed to vote on this issue. I urge you to support SJR 42 with your vote.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Emma M. Deats". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.

Emma Deats
PO Box 87
Juneau, Alaska 99802
907-463-3262