

ALASKA LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIAL AFFAIRS  
1998-1999

9247 HOUSE JUDICIARY

8672

4/27/98

To: Rep. James - 907-465-2381  
 Rep. Green - 907-465-4316  
 (Joe, thanks for what I believe was understanding, as many as 4 years ago)  
 other members of House Judiciary

As the parents of a gay son, living in a long-time committed relationship, my wife and I urge you to vote do not pass on SJR 42 in the House Judiciary Committee.

We love and are proud of our son, as we are of his older brother and younger sister. We are all one family - as is he and his partner. They both work hard, serve on a neighborhood watch program, and collect food for the needy. Our son works in international economic development. Even as I work on economic development in Alaska, he's working to bring free enterprise capitalism to former Soviet block countries and the Balkans.

The short story is my son and his partner are real people, just like us. SJR tries to single them out for special treatment - or lack of it.

Please let the courts at least finish their process on this issue. My 35 years in Alaska has taught me that we value our personal freedom and privacy and that any discrimination is wrong.

I'm sorry I'm out of town or I would be in the Judiciary meeting today to testify against SJR 42. I'd have also spoken with ~~Rep. James~~ <sup>Rep. James</sup> personally at Rotary tomorrow. I'll be back by Thursday. If you can't see your way clear to oppose the resolution, I hope you'll vote to hold it in committee to allow further testimony at a later time.

Thanks,  
 Charlie

Charles Northrip

P.O. Box 20813  
Juneau, AK 99802  
April 26, 1998

Dear Representative:

SJR 42, proposing a constitutional amendment to prohibit same sex marriages, will be before you in the House Judiciary committee today. I urge you to vote against this bill and keep it from moving out of the committee.

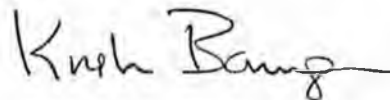
This bill will create an unnecessary hate campaign that will hurt many people in our state, not only those who may seek to enter same sex marriages, but also many of their friends and loved ones. It will also hurt people on both sides of this issue by the atmosphere of hatred it will generate. If you view yourself as a true leader, do not lead the people of Alaska into a tirade of hatred and the promotion of discrimination.

The Superior Court decision that triggered this legislation will be reviewed by the Supreme Court on appeal. Before placing such an issue on the ballot, the legislature should allow the court to complete its review of the legal questions.

The amendment proposed in this legislation will subject the rights of a minority to a majority vote. The amendment itself places discriminatory language within the body of our state's constitution. This is a terrible mistake. I feel certain that, in future years, you will be able to feel proud of any role you took in preventing the promotion of this cause by voting against SJR 42.

Do the right thing. Just say "no" and vote against SJR 42.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kristen Bomengen". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Kristen Bomengen

United Students of the University of Alaska  
Southeast- Juneau Campus  
Resolution # 98-02

Date of Introduction: Friday, April 24, 1998

Sponsored by: Senator Jackson

Title: Opposition to Senate Joint Resolution 42

Purpose: To voice our extreme opposition to the discriminatory and invasive nature of this proposed resolution before the legislature

Whereas: Article I section 2 of the USUAS-JC Constitution states that the purpose of the USUAS-JC is to "...promote the rights of students ... regardless of gender, race, national origin, age, creed, appearance, handicap, social status, economic background, religious affiliation, political affiliation, *sexual preference, and or lifestyle*"

Whereas: The USUAS-JC has an unwavering commitment to the equal rights and protections of all students regardless of above mentioned factors

Whereas: SJR 42 encroaches upon Alaskan's explicit constitutional right to privacy

Whereas: SJR 42 goes against the fundamental principals behind a constitution because it does not protect the rights of any citizen

Whereas: SJR 42 would create ambiguity in the Alaska State Constitution

Be it resolved that the USUAS -JC voices its fundamental opposition to Senate Joint Resolution 42

This action to take effect April 24, 1998

President's Signature: Rosanne M. Lilliest date: 4/28/98

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**CONSTITUTION  
OF THE  
UNITED STUDENTS OF UAS  
JUNEAU CAMPUS**

**PREAMBLE**

We, the Students of the University of Alaska Southeast Juneau Campus, in Order to Provide for the Students herein stated Organized Representation within the University System, the State of Alaska, and the World at-large, do Affirm and Establish this Constitution of the United Students of the University of Alaska Southeast Juneau Campus.

**ARTICLE I  
Section One - NAME**

This organization will be known as the United Students of the University of Alaska Southeast Juneau Campus (USUAS-JC).

**Section Two - PURPOSE**

The purpose of USUAS-JC will be to:

Clause One: Promote the educational needs, general welfare and rights of the students.

Clause Two: Provide an official and representative student organization with powers to receive complaints, investigate student problems and participate in decisions involving the student body.

Clause Three: Foster awareness of the student's role in the campus, local, state, national, and international communities.

Clause Four: Provide services and activities for the students and the University community at large.

Clause Five: Serve all students equally, regardless of gender, race, national origin, age, creed, appearance, handicap, social status, economic background, religious affiliation, political affiliation, sexual preference, and/or lifestyle.

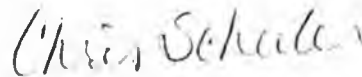
April 27, 1998

Dear Representative Green,

Attached you will find several letters from Alaskan constituents in support of SJR 42. Please read these and take them into consideration as you vote on this very important matter.

Thanks so much for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris Schuler".

Mrs. Chris Schuler

April 27, 1998

Dear Representative,

This is to let you know that I sincerely hope that bill SJR 42, defining marriage as the legal union between "one man and one woman," will pass. Please give this proposed amendment your support.

Thank you very much.

Yours sincerely,

*Mrs. Hilda Hoffman*

Mrs. Hilda Hoffman  
3610 Glacier Highway  
Juneau, AK 99801

April 27, 1998

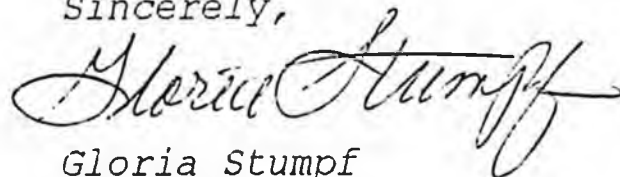
Dear Representative

It's okay to say **yes** to **SJR 42**.

We hear all the time how our families and society are being torn apart by divorce, abortion, kids killing kids, adultery, and now we want to legislate that it is okay for a man to have sex with another man or a woman to have sex with another woman. If they want to have their sex life with each other, then let them work through it on their own and with counseling. Let's not legislate a sexual act is justification for "marriage."

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gloria Stumpf". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and address.

Gloria Stumpf  
9242 Gee Street  
Juneau, AK 99801

April 27, 1998

Dear Representative,

This is regards to SJR 42. Please give this bill your full support!

Structure is basic to our society. When you remove this structure from our society-- society business, and family, - will collapse - every time. Marriage is an institution that can't be separated from the natural complementary of men and women. We can no more "redefine" marriage than we can redefine gender! Marriage & family are the foundational structure of our civilization!

This issue is bigger than the legislature. If passed by the Legislature, SJR 42 will give the voters of Alaska an opportunity to vote on preserving the traditional "one man, one woman" definition of marriage. Polls show that 50 percent of Alaskans are opposed to homosexual "marriage." They deserve a chance to decide this issue. PLEASE give the people of Alaska the opportunity to vote on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ruth Ann Bowman". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name and address.

Ruth Ann Bowman  
4436 Wood Duck  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

(907) 790-2422

April 24, 1998

Dear Representative,

This letter is to ask your support for SJR 42. We only recently became aware that such a bill was even necessary. Due to Judge Peter Michalski's February 27 ruling that the State of Alaska may not be able to refuse marriage licenses to homosexuals on constitutional bases, we are forced to take a positive step in the form of a constitutional amendment. We hope you will agree with the majority of the people of our state that such a profound change in our social underpinnings as Judge Michalski's ruling has created must be subject to a vote of all the people.

Throughout history traditional marriage between a man and a woman has been recognized as the foundation of the family. Now Alaska is faced with the dubious distinction of being the first state in history to recognize other "styles" of marriage. This not only opens the door to homosexual marriage, but polygamy, incestuous marriage (e.g., father and daughter) and perhaps others. Even the federal government defines marriage as a union of only "one man and one woman."

We do not hate homosexuals, or feel that they are second class citizens. Nothing in such a constitutional amendment would prohibit homosexuals from pursuing their own lifestyle. However, it would establish what undoubtedly was the intent of the constitutional drafters: marriage is the union of one man and one woman.

Having lived most of our lives here in Alaska, we have witnessed many bold and positive changes which have benefited our families. But opening our state up to legalized homosexual marriage will have a very destructive effect. If Judge Michalski's ruling is left to stand, that is what we will have.

Thank you for your work on our behalf.

*Lance A. Elphic*  
*Judy Elphic*  
Lance and Judy Elphic  
4216 Taku Blvd.  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Alaska State House of Representatives .

I would like to urge you to vote for SJR 42 . So that we the people would have an opportunity to vote on whether we would accept same sex marriages. As a parent I would hope my children would have a chance to grow up knowing that our laws are clearly defined just like their gender is. It highly concerns me that because the homosexual community is small , that they would be calling themselves an oppressed minority in hopes of getting us to feel bad enough to allow same sex marriages. This has absolutely nothing to do with the fact that we were created as men and to women to compliment each other as we join together in marriage. I believe the common sense of the majority people would not be able to allow this play on our emotions to over rule what the truth is .

Thank you , Debbie Eliason

*Debbie Eliason*

*Debbie Eliason  
17025 Towers Rd  
Juneau, Ak,  
99801*

April 27, 1998

Dear Representative,

I support SJR 42, "The Definition of Marriage," amendment and urge you to give it your full support.

We all came about because of the union of one man and one woman. This union is the foundation block of our society.

**NO UNIONS. NO OFFSPRING. NO SOCIETY.**

However, if you start creating alternative plans (same sex marriages) as an original design, it will chip away at society's foundational block until it crumbles and there is no more society.

For these and other reasons, I support SJR 42 and ask that you do the same. This is an issue that affects all Alaskan voters, and they should have a chance to vote on their future.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

*Linda Hemphill*

Mrs. Linda Hemphill  
4467 Columbia Boulevard  
Juneau, AK 99801

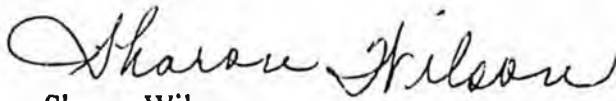
Sharon S. Wilson  
P O Box 211391  
Auke Bay, AK 99821

Dear Representative:

I urge you to support SJR 42, which defines marriage in the traditional way; one man and one woman. When the constitution was written, the acceptable union was one man and one woman, and today should remain the same.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Respectfully,

  
Sharon Wilson

April 25, 1998

Dear Representative,

We strongly support **SJR 42** and hope you will do the same. For the last 200 years our country has recognized marriage as a union between one man and one woman. We believe our founding fathers did an excellent job of creating our government and laws. It has been sad to see those laws reinterpreted to suit the decaying moralities of recent years. Our endeavor to teach our children morals and truth is threatened when our elected officials make decisions that are contrary to those truths. It is then we feel betrayed and wonder whatever happened to "government by the people and for the people."

Thank you for your service in our state government and for considering our request.

Sincerely,

*Cary Henrichsen*

*Shirley Henrichsen*

Cary & Shirley Henrichsen  
PO Box 210116  
Auke Bay, AK 99821

Dear Representative,

I support SJR 42 and I urge you to also support this issue. I believe the traditional way of one man and one woman marriage is the only way we should live. The same sex marriage goes against all my beliefs and should also be that way in our society. I again urge you to support this issue so that we can bring this to all voters in Alaska.

Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jean C. Mallett". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Jean C. Mallett

P.O. Box 35075

Juneau, Alaska 99803

April 23, 1998

**Dear Representative,**

**I am writing to urge you to support SJR42. I believe that traditional marriage is one of the foundational principles on which this country functions best. If we undermine the family, our society will crumble and fall further into decay.**

**Thank you.**

**Julie Wilcke  
P.O. Box 210608  
Auke Bay, AK 99821**

**2135 Cascade  
Juneau, AK 99801**

April 27, 1998

Dear Representative,

I'm writing to urge you to support SJR 42. The definition of marriage has always been used to denote the **legal union between one man and one woman**. This proposed amendment would simply protect that definition. For the definition of marriage to be changed to something else (i.e. same sex relationships), it would need to be shown that it is in society's best interest to change it. That has not been shown nor proved. We need to keep the definition of marriage as one man and one woman.

Please pass SJR 42 so that Alaskans can vote their opinion on the matter. Thank you for your consideration of this subject.

Respectfully,

*Chris Schuler*

Mrs. Chris Schuler  
4066 Deborah Drive  
Juneau, AK 99801

4066 Deborah Drive  
Juneau, AK 99801  
(907) 789-2667  
aecrsas@ptialaska.net  
April 26, 1998

Re: In Support of SJR 42

Dear Representative:

Please support SJR 42. SJR 42 provides the people of Alaska the opportunity to uphold the commonly held and long-standing definition of marriage. I am appalled that a single judge could essentially redefine a written and assumed definition that has been held by all people groups throughout time. Judges should only be allowed to interpret existing laws and not create radically new societal structures, such as homosexual marriages. When judges get out of line, the legislature has the responsibility and obligation to bring the judicial system back in line by clarifying what they intended the law to say, or to bring the issue before the people. This is part of the checks and balances established within our government. Hence, SJR 42 is appropriate and should be passed so the people of Alaska can vote on this critical issue. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Alan E. Schuler

- Dear Representatives:

I am here to express my concern with SJ~~bill~~ 42, involving gay and lesbian marriages. I feel that this bill is unconstitutional.

The arguments for this ~~bill~~ range from "the destruction of marriage" to "confusing our youth" to religion. As I see it, allowing gays and lesbians their constitutional right to choose a partner and to make the life long commitment to each other will only enhance the family. Marriage between two adult people who love and care about each other will set an example for others to follow. This bond can be between a man and a woman, a man and another man, or between two women.

Unfortunately, in today's society a lot of couples do not consider marriage as a life long commitment. I personally know of several marriages which were given God's blessing through a church that have ended too quickly, or are filled with violence/abuse. It is sad for me to look at these marriages knowing that society approves of this union only because it is between a man and a woman. The decay of marriage is already happening and will continue to occur with or without the gay and lesbian marriages. However, I know that my commitment to my partner, of 8 years and counting, will help turn the tides in creating a stable, concrete, build-up of the reconstruction of marriage. Some of my heterosexual friends have looked toward my relationship with my partner as a role model, making statements like: "Your relationship is the most normal I've ever seen in any marriage" and "God, I wish my husband and I communicated as well as you two."

As for confusing our youth, well, our youth can be pretty intuitive. Gay and lesbian youth know that there is something different about them because it is within them, it is not a choice. They may not know what or be able to define it in words right away, but eventually they will realize who they are. At this point they will either try to hide it or they will follow their heart. Unfortunately, the church will refer to them as sinners and evil- I know because it has happened to me. Those gays and lesbians who are devout Christians/Catholics may either abandon their faith in order to survive-which is ashamed or they may commit suicide because they can't deal with it. It is no wonder the suicide rate is highest among gay and lesbian teenagers. The churches need to reach out and love thy neighbors, sisters, and brothers, not push them away. *We are not young anymore.*

*5,82420 ST*  
Please do not support ~~a bill~~ that is unconstitutional.

Thank you for your valuable time, I appreciate having the opportunity to read this.

I'm Sara Boesser of Juneau, with Committee for Equality. I believe it's far too early to consider amending the Constitution's basic privacy rights just to match some people's religious views, because, gratefully, other religious people clearly DO support us. There's no need to interfere with the constitution (especially for implied religious reasons) before the courts are through with a case.

Despite Senator Leman's coaching people to be polite, it's been awful, sitting through these hearings. They prove this ballot campaign would declare open season on us and our families. For example, at Senate Finance recently a pastor declared "the Bible says homosexuals should be stoned to death." As an out lesbian, his words make me afraid. Because if that's not a call to violence, I don't know what is. Of course the Bible says many others "deserve death" too (like bankers, people who eat shellfish, men who shave their beards-- but he didn't go into that).

Religious beliefs differ. In America, at least, constitutions are supposed to protect us from exactly the kind of religious persecution that this ballot campaign would impose.

I'd like to put "marriage" aside, for a moment; because the real issue here is that this bill is premature. Why? Because the lower court decision has a long way to go to resolve at state and possible federal court appeals. There's no need to put Alaska through this ugly, potentially unnecessary campaign, now. By voting "no" you can save us from this premature and possibly unnecessary tear in our social fabric.

Speaking of social fabric, your "no" vote can prevent pain within families, too. Speaking for myself, I have two young nieces who would hear so many untrue hateful things about me and people like me if this went to the ballot. Why should they have to endure that grief? And, more at risk of permanent damage, are those young people my nieces' ages who are just now, in junior high and high school, first realizing they themselves are lesbian or gay. Think of the pressures this ballot measure would place on them; what intense fear they'd feel; what despair they'd suffer, listening to this bombardment of rejection at their vulnerable ages. These youth and their families will suffer more than you can imagine if this premature bill goes to the ballot.

SJR-42 should die in committee. The constitutional debate should stay in the courts; the religious debate should stay in the churches. These hearings are a mild microcosm of the pain-packed fury ahead for the entire state if you proceed. So please -- vote no on this bill.

Sara Boesser

Juneau

586-5230 (w)

A Statement in Support of Preserving the Alaska Constitution and  
of Preventing a Morally Indefensible Law  
Which Would Ban Same-Sex Marriages

MORISSA LOU WILLIAMS

P.O. Box 240791, Douglas, Alaska 99824-0791

April 27, 1998

My name is MORISSA LOU WILLIAMS. I am 40 years old and the descendant, as most Americans are, of immigrants to the United States. Most of my family perished in Nazi occupied Europe. Though you might not guess it from my name, I am Jewish. "Williams" was what is often called an Ellis Island change. An official processing my grandfather's entry into the country gave up on my father's father's Polish name, and set him down for his future life in America as Williams.

I owe my existence to the courage of Americans who loved justice, compassion and mercy - the greatest gifts God has given us - more than they feared the great challenge of human differences. I have thus received a mandate not only from my religious tradition but from the tradition of the United States of America to stop short at the gates of persecution and bigotry. Beyond those gates lies the corrosion and ruin of human souls.

For some reason there is a pretense - a lie - in our times that there is something wrong or unusual about a man loving a man or a woman loving a woman. I doubt very much that there is even a single person in this building who has never been attracted to someone of their own gender. It is an entirely natural thing that one child of God should find another child of God worthy of love. As Socrates said, love is the love of what is lovely. Love has nothing at all to do with gender. Love of any kind is the natural consequence of our being the children of a loving God.

This is what I believe. I think it may be possible that supporters of the bill banning same-sex marriage are suffering from a crisis in faith: they do not believe that God loves them enough, and they are trying to exclude other people from God's love because they are suffering from loneliness or fear. But God has infinite love. There is not a need to be frightened that God will forget one person because God loves another. Human beings may be limited in their capacities, but only to the extent they forget they come from an infinite creator. There is plenty of love, and always will be, if we choose to draw upon it and welcome it into our midst.

I have studied religion and theology for a long time. I received a B.A. in Biblical Studies from Wellesley College in 1978. I have studied Old Testament and New Testament theology not only in the comfort of the academic classroom but also in the more rigorous classrooms of such places as an integrated school in Belfast, Northern Ireland and in other places of racial, economic or religious historical conflict. In America integration refers to black and white. In Belfast it refers to Catholic and Protestant. Elsewhere it might refer to Hindu and Moslem, or Moslem and Christian, or Moslem and Jew, rich or poor, or the good Lord knows what.

(continued on page two)

What I have learned is that it is a very bad mistake to imagine that we can dictate to anyone whom one loves, or on what terms. The way we love one another is a reflection of the way we love God. If we despise even one of God's children for loving another, then we despise God, who created us all. Again, this is what I believe. I understand that many people do not believe in a God, and I respect their feelings. Perhaps the framers of this bill have stopped believing in God, or their faith has been shaken. I can respect these feelings, too. But I cannot support the consequences of such feelings. If the framers of this bill wish to put this bill through on a false notion that to prevent the public and legal expression of love would somehow please God, then I must protest on three levels: as a citizen of the United States, as a citizen of Alaska, and as a person of faith who has spent the preponderance of her life contemplating theological questions.

The poet and songwriter Ysaye M. Barnwell wrote a song for gospel musicians which goes:

*Prayer*

Lord, must I do unto others  
before they do unto me  
Must I arm myself  
to protect myself  
from harm and injury?

Oh no, that is not the lesson  
that I learned on my Mother's knee  
when she told me to  
"Do unto others, only what I'd have them do unto me."

I would not wish to see any bond injured between two people who have the courage to show commitment and reverence. In Nazi Germany the church itself was scorned and defiled along with Gays, Jews and anyone who threatened the paranoid illness of the Reich. This kind of bill is immoral and contrary to our constitution. It is a sad reminder of times when love was considered dangerous. It is, most of all, a brutal insult to a loving God. Thank God, we in Alaska need not suffer the paranoid behavior of ill leaders. When our leaders have lapses in judgment, we can guide them gently back to faith. Let us do so, preserving both Constitution and hope.

April 27, 1998

Dear Members of the House Judiciary Committee

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.

I am here to speak against the passage of SJR 42. I think we should let the Supreme Court issue a ruling on this matter, before we even consider voting for a Constitutional Amendment.

Amending Alaska's Constitution is a very serious matter.

After listening to the debate on this issue in the Senate, I still find no logical reason for amending Alaska's Constitution to allow discrimination against a portion of Alaska's citizens.

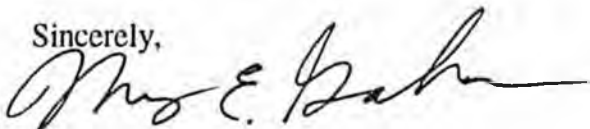
I don't see how my choice of a life partner, can affect anyone else's marriage. It is not like love is a non-renewable resource or there are a limited number of marriage licenses for the state to issue.

Most of the reasons I have heard for supporting this amendment, are based on personal religious convictions, and an attempt to keep the status quo. Well it's time for Alaska to move beyond the status quo. There are many couples who are granted marriage licenses now, who's marriages I personally don't approve of, or agree with, but that doesn't give me the right to say they shouldn't be granted a civil marriage license.

If this measure goes on the ballot, there will be months of divisive debate filled with hate, lies and stereotypes. We don't need that to happen in Alaska.

Please let SJR 42 be put to rest.

Sincerely,



Mary E. Graham  
235 5<sup>th</sup> St.  
Juneau, AK 99801

P.S. In Jan 1998, the Netherlands created registration of Partnerships which gives same-sex partners all the same civil legal rights and benefits and responsibilities as married heterosexual couples including custody and adoptions. The sponsor of this Bill has stated numerous times no country in the western world has same sex "marriage".

Statement re: SJR 42

April 27, 1998

I'm here to request that you give the people of the state of Alaska the right to vote on an issue that is seen differently by Judge Michalski and by some of you. Some of us believe in giving the same tough love to those who choose sex with someone of the same sex as you would to an alcoholic. Would you tell an alcoholic that his drinking is ok? and think that by accepting his behavior you are showing kindness to him? No. You tell an alcoholic that what he is doing is wrong, but that you love him. Real love is tough enough to risk rejection - an almost certain rejection - temporarily, to try to give wholeness to one with difficult temptations.

Because we practice tough love, those of us who won't agree to the charade of same sex marriages love those who choose same sex sex more than those who won't oppose it.

But this debate is more that about the illusion of kindness in allowing same sex marriages. It is about putting the matter before the public. The legislature is supposed to represent the people, but will be seen by the people as dictators and tyrants if they do not want the people to have a voice in such an important matter. If you do not vote for this, then you are voting against the right of the people to be heard because you don't like what they will say. Even though I say this, I do expect better of you and expect you to act honorably and to vote for SJR 42.

HOUSE JUDICIARY HEARING on SJR42

My name is Mildred Boesser. I am 73 years old, mother of 4 and grandmother of 4, a homemaker and a clergy wife. My husband and I came to Alaska as Episcopal missionaries in 1954. This year we celebrate our 50th year of marriage. He would be here today to testify with me, but he is out of town. Most certainly I am not here to shoot down the institution of marriage. I want to enlarge the concept. I oppose SJR 42.

Like you, I say I want to protect and encourage life-long, monogamous unions. So, why are we moving NOT to protect or encourage life-long monogamous unions? I know of many same-sex couples who have lived together for as long as my husband and I, without the benefits we enjoy.

Like you, I want to turn back the tide of broken marriages and address all the anguish and havoc for adults and children that such breakdowns wreck on our society. How can we be blind to the fact that this disintegration of the heterosexual two-parent family is a problem completely separate from our granting basic civil rights to gay and lesbian couples?

We live in a nation that prides itself on having in place a system that treats all persons as equal. Why are we attempting to change the system to deny equal rights to some? And shame on us for calling these rights "special rights", a ruse historically used to legitimate discrimination!

We live under a constitutional Bill of Rights that expressly forbids the intrusion of any religion in affairs of state, yet we are moving to do just that, and scaring good God-fearing people into believing same-sex marriage will destroy so-called traditional marriage. Actually, this whole matter is not about making religious bodies do or believe ANYTHING they do not choose to do or believe. The push for same-sex marriage is about civil marriage and the long list of rights and privileges that are currently given to civil marriage.

However you feel about gay and lesbian persons is not the issue here. Unfortunately it colors and distorts the issue. This resolution is about changing the Constitution to say it's all right to discriminate! Who will we choose to discriminate against next time? This whole thing brings to my mind, having lived through it, the incredible injustice done to so many

innocent people by the infamous McCarthy witch hunts in the 30s, not to mention the unspeakable horror of the mass execution of Jews in the Holocaust AND during that same time the execution of homosexual persons, a fact not often mentioned in connection with the Holocaust.

Make no mistake, any time a government condones the marginalization of a group of its citizens, the door is opened to unbelievable hatred and violence which are sure to follow, and Alaska will be no exception. Please do not pass SJR 42.

Mildred P. Boesser  
17585 Lena Loop  
Juneau, Ak. 99801  
phone and FAX 789-1445

April 27, 1998

To: House Judiciary Committee  
Alaska State Legislature  
Juneau, Alaska

Members of the Committee:

I am writing to let you know that I oppose SJR-42 being put on the ballot. The issue of same-sex marriage needs to be defined by the courts; making it a political issue does not make sense. Not only will it be a waste of taxpayers' money, but I believe it will further divide the people of Alaska to such an extent that a calm and rational discourse on this issue will be impossible.

Trying to legislate a moral issue is not your purpose.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Sue McGowan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

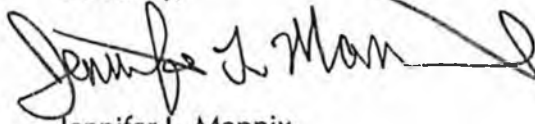
M. Sue McGowan  
P. O. Box 21842  
Juneau, Alaska 99802

April 27, 1998

House Judiciary Committee:

I strongly oppose SJR 42. Please vote against it.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jennifer L. Mannix", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Jennifer L. Mannix  
P.O. Box 33383  
Juneau, Alaska 99803  
(907) 789-3654

Anchorage Legislative Information Office (LIO)  
 • 716 W 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 200, Anchorage, AK 99501 • Phone: 258-8111 Fax: 258-1261

**This form MUST be completely filled out. You may phone, fax, or deliver your POM to any LIO.**

**From:** Please PRINT the information below.

Mr., Mrs.	First name Lauren	M.I.	Last name Chempaine	Jr., Sr., III...
Mailing address 310 Irwin St, B, Juneau, AK				Zip code 99801
Residence (street) address if different from mailing address				Zip code
Daytime telephone number 586-4404	Group affiliation (if applicable) National Association of Social Workers ALASKA CHAPTER		Signature Lauren Chempaine	Date 7/25/98

**To:** Put a ✓ in the appropriate box(es).

	Committees	House members	Senate members
H or S			
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community & Regional Affairs (cra)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Finance (fii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Health, Ed., & Social Services (hes)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Judiciary (jud)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Labor & Commerce (l&c)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resources (res)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rules (ris)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	State Affairs (sta)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Transportation (tra)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Anchorage (age)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Fairbanks/Interior (Int)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Matsu (mat)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Majorty (mjr)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Minority (mnr)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
		Austerman (aus)	Kelly, P. (kil)
		Bames (bar)	Kempen (kem)
		Berkowitz (ber)	Kohring (kor)
		Brice (bri)	Kookesh (kos)
		Bunde (bun)	Kott (kot)
		Cowdery (cwd)	Kubina (kub)
		Croft (cro)	Martin (mar)
		Davies (dav)	Masek (mas)
		Davis (dag)	Moses (mos)
		Dyson (dys)	Mulder (mul)
		Elton (elt)	Nicholia (nic)
		Foster (fos)	Ogan (oga)
		Green (gm)	Phillips, G. (phg)
		Grussendorf (grs)	Porter (por)
		Hanley (han)	Rokeberg (rok)
		Hodgins (hod)	Ryan (rya)
		Hudson (hud)	Sanders (san)
		Ivan (iva)	Therriault (thr)
		James (jam)	Vezev (vez)
		Joule (jle)	Williams (wil)
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			Donley (don)
			Duncan (dun)
			Ellis (ell)
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			Leman (lem)
			Lincoln (lin)
			Mackie (mak)
			Miller (mil)
			Parnell (par)
			Pearce (pea)
			Phillips, R. (phi)
			Sharp (sha)
			Taylor (tay)
			Torgerson (tor)
			Ward (war)
			Wilken (wik)

**Subject:** Fill out the boxes below **OR** enter a Subject.

HB or SB SB	Bill number STR-42	and check one:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support	<input type="checkbox"/> Oppose	<input type="checkbox"/> Amend	<b>OR</b> enter a general Subject (LIO staff may modify):
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**Message:** Your PRINTED message cannot exceed 50 words or contain any vulgar language.

House	members	please	join	the	5
brave	six	senators	who	showed	10
strength	in	character	when	they	15
opposed	STR-42	despite	it's	explosive	20
power.	Please	stop	this	bill	25
and	protect	our	communities	from	30
any	further	destructive	forces	six	35
months	of	hateful	"religious"	justified	40
but	destructive	lighting	is	for	45
long.	Thank you	for	your	consideration.	50

P.O. Box 22866  
Juneau, AK 99802  
April 27, 1998

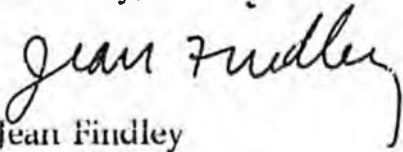
Dear Representative:

I urge you to oppose SJR 42. This issue is already being decided in the courts, where it belongs. It is too bitter and divisive to be put on the ballot.

Today Sen. Leman said that you should put this on the ballot so that the state could save money in legal fees. But money is one reason it does not belong on the ballot. The issue would become a media event where those with the most money win. I'm sure we'd see many TV ads that prey upon peoples' paranoia about those who are different. This would make our constitutional rights a farce, and severely divide our state. I would hope we are more civilized than that.

With SJR 42, the legislature is already playing political football with peoples' civil rights - and this is politics at its worst. You have the power to stop this game right now and drop this resolution.

Sincerely,

  
Jean Findley

**Testimony on SJR 42**  
by Alan Schuler (of Juneau)  
April 27, 1998

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on SJR 42. I believe the Legislature should pass SJR 42 so that the people of Alaska can vote on this critical issue.

Many of the opponents to SJR 42 expressed how this bill would "limit" marriage. I believe the correct perspective is that SJR 42 would "clarify" the commonly held boundaries and prevent it from being *broadened* to include homosexual unions. It does not add additional restrictions to marriage.

Opponents have stated that SJR 42 invades privacy laws. If privacy was a real concern of the homosexual community, they would not be seeking a public marriage license. In reality, SJR 42 *does not* invade privacy laws or personal choice. People are still free to live with whomever they wish. SJR 42 only clarify that the State is not obligated to classify homosexual unions as "marriage."

Similarly, the expansion of marriage is not a judicial responsibility. Laws are established by the legislature and interpreted by the judicial system. It is not the responsibility of the judicial system to expand laws beyond their original intent. When this happens, the legislature has the responsibility and obligation to bring the judicial system back in line by clarifying what they intended the law to say. Hence, SJR 42 is appropriate.

SJR 42 has nothing to do with civil rights. A person's race or gender is intrinsic. In contrast, homosexual activity is a choice. Even if a person believes they were born as a homosexual, that does not obligate the State to expand marriage laws. For example, it is commonly accepted that some people are more prone to alcoholism than others. However, this intrinsic condition has not obligated the State to loosen drunk driving laws. Similarly, the presence of homosexual activity in our society does not obligate the State to loosen marriage laws.

I strongly urge the quick passage of SJR 42 so that the legal definition of marriage may be clarified. Thank you.

P.O. Box 22493  
Juneau, AK 99802

Alaska State Legislature  
House of Representatives  
House Judiciary Committee  
Juneau, AK 99801

April 27, 1998

Dear House Judiciary Committee Member:

I am opposed to SJR-42. I urge you to kill this bill in committee. I am an Alaskan resident, and I oppose this bill for several reasons. First, I believe that this bill is unnecessary. This issue is currently before the courts in Alaska, and I believe that is where it should be resolved.

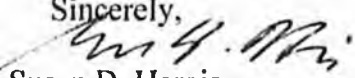
Second, I believe that this bill is divisive and will create an opportunity for hate-mongering in the upcoming election season. There are many who will tell you that they do not "hate" gays and lesbians. This is undoubtedly true. The problem lies in the fact that there are many individuals who DO hate lesbians and gays, and this controversy will bring them out in full force. This is not conjecture. This scenario has been played out several times across the country, each time with a rise in anti-gay violence. I have recently had the opportunity to staff the phone line for the Southeast Alaska Gay & Lesbian Alliance, and I can tell you that some of the calls are extremely threatening and unpleasant. We don't need to foster this kind of hate by creating an unnecessary ballot measure.

The third and most important reason I oppose this bill is that I believe passage of this bill is the wrong thing to do. I believe that you, as legislators, bear the responsibility to support and defend the basic rights of ALL Alaskans. It does not matter whether you agree with same-sex marriage, or even homosexuality in general. What DOES matter is that you defend the rights of all adult Alaskans to make their own life choices, including choice of their own partner.

Putting this bill on the ballot, and even possible passage by a general vote will not make these families go away. What it will do is to continue to foster the misconception that "somehow," gays and lesbians are responsible for the decline of American society. Rather than recognizing and giving all stable, long-term relationships the dignity that they deserve, this bill seeks to pretend that these relationships do not exist. Somehow, it just doesn't resonate as true to me that individuals in long-term relationships will threaten traditional marriages.

I urge you to exercise your individual freedom as legislators to vote your conscience on this bill. This kind of intrusive bill is absolutely not what either political party is about. Let Alaskans live their own lives, and kill this bill in committee.

Sincerely,

  
Susan D. Hargis

April 24, 1998

During this legislative session I have listened with great frustration and sadness to the attempts to pass SJR-42, the bill banning same sex marriages in the state of Alaska. During these last few months I've also been wondering how many of Juneau's citizens recall what happened in the state of Oregon during the 1992 election year? Does Ballot Measure 9 ring any bells? If not, Ballot Measure 9 was a bill to amend the Oregon state constitution declaring homosexuality "abnormal and perverse". I vividly recall that year. I remember watching and hearing about heated debates between those who opposed "special rights" for one group of people and those who felt that Ballot Measure 9 was an oppressive, discriminatory and hateful piece of legislation.

I remember hearing about the 100% rise in hate crimes during and after the campaign, not only against gay and lesbian people, but against people of color, religious minorities, and women. I remember the story of the catholic church that was vandalized, large swastikas spray-painted throughout the interior and around the exterior of the building, beautiful stained-glass windows smashed, and the words, "No Spics, Jews or Gays", "We hate Catholics and Gays", "Yes on 9", "No on special rights", "Kill Catholics and Gays", and ironically, "Yes on family values" covering the walls of that holy sanctuary. I recall crying when I heard the news about the two roommates, an African American lesbian and a young gay man who were burned to death when their apartment was fire-bombed by racist skin-heads who supported Ballot Measure 9. I also remember the story of the young gay man who was beaten to death by a group of teenagers after leaving a night club. These were only a few of the acts of intimidation and terrorization that occurred in Oregon during 1992.

Imagine this kind of violence taking place in our state and even in our own community. It seems so unlikely, so horrifying. I can assure you that if SJR-42 goes to the ballot this fall, we **WILL** see similar incidences of violence and hate crimes take place in Alaska. Each city and state in our nation that has experienced this sort of discriminatory legislation has seen violence increase. Not only will gay and lesbian Alaskans be at risk of being victimized by hate crimes, **ALL** minority groups will be at risk. Putting this kind of bigotry and hatred on the ballot only gives permission for those with the most anger and hatred toward any oppressed group to act out that anger and hatred in the form of violence. When some of our elected leaders propose legislation that simply fuels bigotry, how can we expect anything positive to result from it?

I encourage all of Juneau's citizens to think about what this might mean for our community and our state as a whole. Do we want to see this divisive bill on the ballot? I encourage all members of the House of Representatives to think about this when it is time to vote on SJR-42. Additionally, I encourage all Juneau residents to consider the impact that this could have on each of you and each of your friends and family members should this bill be passed. We must remember the famous words of Emma Goldman who said, "The most violent element in society is ignorance". Finally, for those of you who truly believe that allowing same-sex partners to marry is a "special right", please consider this; when you haven't had the right to be there in the first place, how can opening the door be a special right? Let us be a model for the rest of the country and show how we, Alaskans, can work to unite our state and it's citizens rather than divide it.

Karen Wood - Juneau, Alaska



# Mush with PRIDE

Providing Responsible Information on a Dog's Environment

David Monson, President Mush with PRIDE  
P.O. Box 60249  
Fairbanks, AK 99706

Sen. Dave Donely  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

March 18, 1998

RE: SB-284 ANIMAL CRUELTY BILL

Dear Sen. Donely,

Thank you for your continuing efforts to strengthen Alaska's animal cruelty laws. We believe that the lowering of the criminal standard for prosecution of cruelty to animals is a necessary step in protecting Alaska's domestic animals from negligent owners.

Sleddog medicine has become a specialty within the veterinary profession. Veterinary members of the International Sled Dog Veterinary Medical Association (an internationally recognized professional organization), as well as most veterinarians in the Alaska Veterinary Medical Association are well aware of the conditions and standards used in assessing care and well-being of sleddogs. In addition, Mush with PRIDE has issued Sleddog Care Guidelines which set standards for most common sleddog practices. These PRIDE standards, which have been endorsed by all major Alaskan racing organizations (Iditarod, Quest and ADMA) as well as most international sleddog racing groups (ISDRA and IFSS) were developed with constant input from several mushing veterinarians who are Directors of PRIDE. Therefore, we believe that the current statute does provide adequate protection against prosecution. We do not feel that any other musher-specific defense against prosecution is needed to protect mushers against prosecution.

We are hopeful that SB-284 will be passed this session so that state officials can better deal with the small minority of abusive owners who tarnish the image of our state and the official state sport of dogsledding.

Sincerely,

David Monson



# THE ALASKA SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS, INC.

SPCA State Headquarters and Spay Clinic • 549 W. International Airport Road • Anchorage, Alaska 99518  
Phone: 562-2999

March 2, 1998

To Whom It May Concern:

The Alaska Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, SPCA is in full support of SB 284. Efforts in past cruelty cases have been next to nothing. Alaska needs to have a stronger law to support our justice system in prosecution of animal abusers. The SPCA in past years, has witnessed animal abusers in the worst scenarios. Due to insufficient laws, the District Attorney's office was unable to penalize these people. Animal abuse is and has been occurring throughout the state. Most people are unaware of the severity of some of these cases. Public awareness is increasing and the state needs to update legislation to deal with cruelty offenders.

Statistics show that there is a definite link between animal cruelty and spousal, child abuse occurring within the home.

Again, the SPCA, as well as most of the general public, are in strong support of SB 284, and show a very strong interest in the passage of this bill.

Sincerely,

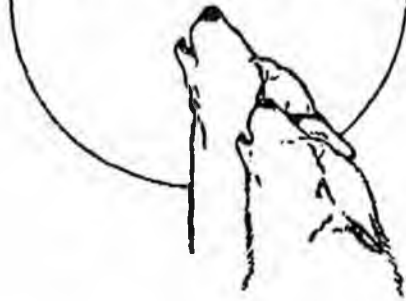
Ethel Christensen, Director

Diane Zarfoss

John McLane

Diane Vuckovich

Lori Cornett



February 26, 1998

Senator Dave Donley  
State Capitol Building  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Senator Dave Donley:

On behalf of the Gastineau Humane Society we would like to go on record as being in support of Senate Bill 284. The statutory language currently in AS 11.61.140 is very difficult to prove and courts have been unable to prosecute a number of neglect and cruelty cases. Bill 284 will improve the language in AS 11.61.140 and enable prosecutors to convict those that have participated in obvious acts of neglect and cruelty.

Currently both the Humane Society of the United States and American Humane have initiated campaigns, "First Strike Animal Cruelty / Human Violence" and "Campaign Against Violence", this year to increase the awareness and alert all agencies involved in addressing issues of child abuse and neglect that there is a high correlation between animal abusers and child abusers. If the animal abuser can be prosecuted under AS 11.61.140 this could be a tool not only to prevent further animal cruelty but also provide opportunity for intervention in cases where children are also victims.

If there is anything I can do to facilitate passage of Bill 284 please let me know.

Sincerely,

Linda M. Bleggen  
Executive Director



# FAIRBANKS NORTH STAR BOROUGH

2408 Davis Road \* P.O. Box 71267 \* Fairbanks, Alaska 99707-1267

Department of Direct Services  
Division of Animal Control

(907) 459-1451 \* FAX (907) 459-1120

March 13, 1998

The Honorable Dave Donley  
Alaska State Capitol, Room 508  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator,

I support passage of CSSB 284, an act relating to cruelty to animals.

The proposed changes create a more useful tool for investigators and prosecutors of cruelty to animals cases than the current language. It has long been known that under the current statute the only good evidence to prove the crime of cruelty to animals is a dead animal. The proposed changes will give enforcement officers the ability to intervene and hopefully save animals before they die or suffer severe injury due to inhumane treatment.

With the strong connection between cruelty to animals and abuse of children and other humans it is essential that we take cruelty to animals very seriously. Recognition, intervention and effective prosecution of cruelty to animals cases may help prevent the cycle of abuse from continuing in Alaskan families. Cruelty to animals cannot be tolerated, and an enforceable law is the first step in addressing the problem. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Laura Hood, Manager  
Division of Animal Control

To all Alaska State Representatives

RE: SJR 42

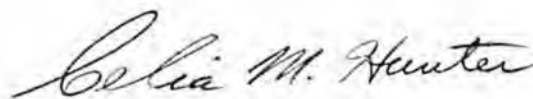
FROM: Celia M. Hunter, 1819 Musko Trail, Fairbanks, AK 99709  
(907) 479-2754

I am writing to you as one of your constituents. I am strongly opposed to passage of SJR 42, and to having the subject of same-sex marriages placed on the ballot this fall. The result of such a move on the part of the Legislature would contribute enormously to the divisive, abusive rhetoric already flying about on this issue.

The basic philosophy behind this negative resolution reiterates many untruths concerning the "assumed" consequences of permitting same-sex marriages to be performed. Marriage has many legal ramifications and protections for married couples, as well as responsibilities, and the willingness of same-sex couples to undertake such a commitment is evidence that they want the same kind of stability in their unions as heterosexual couples.

I strongly urge you to vote against SJR 42 in the interests of peace and comity among all of Alaska's diverse peoples. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Celia M. Hunter

Please retain this letter in the files on SJR 42.