



David E. Clarenbach

S P E A K E R P R O T E M O F T H E A S S E M B L Y

May 7, 1985

COPY

Senator Michael Carpenter
Representative Ed Kane
Co-Chairs of the Maine Judiciary Committee
State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Senator Carpenter & Representative Kane:

I'm writing to you as the author of Wisconsin's first-in-the-nation gay rights law, Chapter 114, Laws of 1981 (enclosed). This legislation prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation in housing, public accommodations and public and private sector employment. It has been over three years since this law passed both houses of our legislature on a bipartisan vote and was signed into law by a governor of the minority people.

Since enactment of this historic law, none of the dire prophecies from the opponents of this initiative have come to pass, but rather Wisconsin's strong commitment to equal rights and opportunities for all its citizens has been strengthened. Our current Governor, Anthony S. Earl, has gone on to appoint a Governor's Council on Lesbian and Gay Issues as a liaison to our state's gay community.

I would encourage you to consider and enact similar legislation in Maine, and am more than happy to supply you with information that you would consider helpful in your deliberations. I have enclosed some statements of support for Wisconsin's gay rights bill from the time it was being debated and acted upon by our legislature, including many from our state's mainstream religious community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

David Clarenbach
State Representative

encl.

422 North, State Capitol
Madison, Wisconsin 53702
608-266-8570



David E. Clarenbach

S P E A K E R P R O T E M O F T H E A S S E M B L Y

September 30, 1983

Rep. Jim Dressel
P.O. Box 102
Grand Haven, MI 49417

Dear Jim:

This letter is in response to your questions about what affect Wisconsin's enactment of legislation prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation has had on those legislators who voted for it. This law passed both houses on a bipartisan vote and was signed by a governor of the minority party. Generally speaking, I don't believe it was a major issue in the following election, nor do I feel it will be in the future.

More specifically, attached is a list of legislators who voted for and against Wisconsin's gay rights bill, 1981 Assembly Bill 70, and their subsequent political fortunes. I think it's evident that only two Representatives and one Senator could have been defeated because of their support for AB 70. I have talked with all three of these legislators and all feel that their support for this initiative wasn't the cause of their defeat, but rather the new districts they were placed in because of reapportionment.

Gay rights was an issue in the Governor's election last year. Incumbent Governor Lee Dreyfus who signed the gay rights bill into law did not seek reelection. Candidate Tony Earl pledged his support for gay rights and our change in the law, and was attacked for this support by opponent Terry Kohler -- who promised vigorously to pursue a repeal effort. Governor Earl won this contest by the largest margin ever in a gubernatorial election and has since appointed a Council on Lesbian and Gay issues. Furthermore, no serious repeal effort has been mounted this session.

If I can be of any further help, please let me know.

Sincerely,

David Clarenbach
State Representative

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