

DOVER HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION

A G E N D A

June 24, 2009 - 7:00 P.M. - Council Chambers - City Hall - City of Dover

Public comments are welcomed on any item and will be permitted at appropriate times. When possible, please notify the City Clerk (736-7008 or e-mail at Tmcdowell@dover.de.us) should you wish to be recognized.

1. Call to Order/Moment of Silence
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Adoption of Minutes - May 27, 2009
4. Comments from Members of the Community
5. Chair's Report (Hoff)
 - A. Activities by DHRC Members
 - B. Budget Report
 - C. Contractual Assistant: Ad and Budget
 - D. Other
6. Committee Reports
 - A. Intake Screening (*Bunkley*)
 - B. Community Programs (*Sudler*)
 - C. School Programs (*Wasfi*)
 - D. Assessment (*Edamatsu*)
7. Unfinished Business
 - A. Report on Slavery Apology Project (*Monroe*)
 - B. Action on Gay Marriage Resolution (s)
8. New Business
 - A. Proposal for Orientation Packet/Training for New Members (*Gregory*)
 - B. Proposal for Annual Review of Bylaws (*Wasfi*)
 - C. Strategic Planning (*Gregory*)
 - D. Freedom of Information (*Gregory*)
 - E. Thanks for Service
9. Discussion and Announcements
10. Adjournment

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THE AGENDA ITEMS AS LISTED MAY NOT BE CONSIDERED IN SEQUENCE. THIS AGENDA IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE TO INCLUDE THE ADDITION OR THE DELETION OF ITEMS, INCLUDING EXECUTIVE SESSIONS.

Dover Human Relations Commission
Wednesday, May 27, 2009 - 7:10 P.M.
Council Chambers, City Hall

Commission Members in Attendance: Commission Chair Samuel Hoff, Commissioners, Vice Chair Gregory Bunkley, Katrina Brumble, Phyllis Edamatsu, Paul Fleming, Catherine Gregory, Brian Lewis, Mark Monroe, Nauleen Perry, Dawn Allen-Pyne, Roy Sudler, Ellen Wasfi.

Excused: Commissioner Anlee Baccio-Walker

- **Call to Order/Moment of Silence:** Meeting called to order at 7:07 p.m.
- **Approval of the Agenda:** Chairman Hoff opened the floor to requests or additions to the agenda whereupon Vice Chair Bunkley called for an amendment to the proposed agenda given the large community attendance at this evening's meeting. He moved to revise the agenda for the public discussion. It was seconded by Commissioner Lewis. The motion carried unanimously. Vice Chair Bunkley then motioned for the suspension of the rules governing the time limit on community comments, thus allowing each person who wished to speak be permitted while still observing the three minute rule. This was seconded by Commissioner Fleming. The motion passed unanimously.

Given the large attendance by members of the community, Chairman Hoff allowed members of the audience to sit on the floors with the proviso that exits and walkways remain clear in accordance with state fire laws.

Commissioner Gregory asked what the rules of public comment were and if there would be any public debate. Chairman Hoff assured her that this was simply a forum for public comment.

- **Comments from Members of the Community:** Chairman Hoff began the evening's discussion by stating that the issue of same sex marriage was the third rail of American social issues however the controversy of any subject should not blind anyone to the issue of fairness and equal representation. It has been thirteen years since this topic was first discussed in an open forum with the defense of Mary Jack passed in the state of Delaware in 1996. Chairman Hoff reminded the assembly that had the State Legislature initiated the discussion at the time, this issue would be impacting the entire State. The constituents of the Commission are the residents of Dover and in presenting the public discussion, the DHRC wanted to be as fair as possible to anyone who wanted to speak. The DHRC did allow an equal number of people to speak, those who registered with the City Clerk's office, and those who signed the Speaker-Sign-In sheet as well as those who wished to simply come to the podium and voice their concerns. Chairman Hoff assured the audience that there was no screening of individual positions on this topic prior to the meeting, nor was this discussion limited to those citizens of the Dover area. He believed unlikely that an enacted law would only impact Dover. Chairman Hoff stated that the Commission had received e-mails about the topic of same-sex marriage via the City Clerk's office. He reminded the audience of the three minute time limit that begins the moment an individual steps up to the podium and asked the audience to keep audience reaction (hand clapping or booing, etc.) to a minimum but did respect their right to free speech. He asked that participating audience members speak about their feelings on this topic rather than debate Commission members.

Chairman Hoff then discussed the origins of the resolution and what it exactly means in terms of the process: under the normal rules of the Commission, all actions must be communicated to members at least ten days prior to a meeting. This resolution was communicated three weeks ago

and they in turn had three weeks to comment. Chairman Hoff made it clear that Commission members had not yet publically discussed the issue nor has the Commission taken a position on the issue. The resolution was initiated as one of the charges of the Commission and to hear different views on the Commission. The Commission considered the Federal law The Defense of Marriage Act as well as the five states that have approved same-sex marriage and those that are on the precept of doing so. The DHRC also considers issues such as civil versus religious society, institutions and traditions versus constitutional language as the general language clause of the U.S Constitution of general happiness and the Delaware Constitutional clause of happiness and the Fourteenth Amendment. The DHRC has looked the rule of the majority and minority (numerical) rights. The General Assembly of Delaware recently defeated an anti-discrimination statute. The State of Delaware also defeated an attempt to ban same-sex marriage by constitutional amendment. Therefore the DHRC stands undecided on the issue which is why public input is so valuable to the DHRC to determine the direction of the resolution. Chairman Hoff assured the audience that their opinions would be critical to the resolution and its future direction. Chairman Hoff reminded his colleagues that the resolution had the opportunity to be revised before the meeting and later at the June 24th meeting. Chairman Hoff reiterated that this evenings meeting was designed hear public views whereby Commission members can make an informed decision on the issue in addition to their own views. An audience member asked that an audience member asked that speakers not be interrupted would be observed. Chairman Hoff agreed this was fair and stated that twenty four people had signed up to speak which should take approximately one hour. Another audience member became confused on this point whereby Chairman Hoff explained that with the three minutes rule, the twenty four who wished to speak should take about an hour but anyone who wished to speak could do so.

1. Louanne Barrett of Dover:

Dr. Hoff, Members of the Dover Human Relations Commission and Guests,

Thank you for this chance to speak about this resolution. First, I say that I have no ill toward anyone who disagrees with me. I like the gays I know. It is not hate speech to assert what every other generation has taken for granted.

Let's discuss the "Law of Unintended Consequences". Some issues that seem fair can lead to other events that not. This is not a simple matter of mutual tolerance of equal rights. We see chaos and endless litigation in communities, schools and churches in states that have legalized "gay marriage".

"What difference does it make to me, and how does it affect my life, whether gays or lesbians marry?" It affects my 16 descendants, to be exposed at a tender age to a life style that can bring them unhappiness and disease.

When I taught Human Relations in College, students filled out logs that I graded. I had no desire to intrude, but two logs, expressing jealousy, suspicion and infidelity belonged to gay students. There are probably some stable gay relationships, but these logs convinced me that the word "gay" often does not apply to this choice, especially when we add diseases that the Center for Disease Control reports, such as increased cases of syphilis, Aids and gay bowel syndrome, which included fecal contamination and intestinal parasites. Some studies even indicate that gays have a shorter life span.

The goal of your commission is to promote harmony, but if children are force-fed a differing philosophy that their parents, who have no right to object, I worry that homophobia will increase, not diminish. Parents should have the right to fire anyone,

heterosexual or homosexual, who teaches them a different value system, whether it be teacher, scout leader, baby sitter, or clergy.

Parents in Mass. Schools are given no prior notice or permission to exempt their child from indoctrination.

In “King an King’, a book for kindergarten and first grade, children who can’t even write their names yet learn that gay marriage is a desirable life style.

Another book, “It’s Perfectly Normal”, for 10-year olds, has pictures of a variety of sex acts and nudity, porn that would have gotten earlier generations of artistic children suspended.

According to our Constitution, government has no power to define marriage, because it is a sacrament, part of religious liberty, and protected by the First Amendment already. When the people vote directly on this issue, gay marriage is defeated. If our senators vote otherwise, Delaware may need its own Proposition 8.

Gay marriage and religious liberty cannot co-exist, as in the experience of a Methodist group in New Jersey that lost their tax exemption when they refused to marry two women, costing them \$20,000.00. In adoptions, natural parents should have the right to select traditional family placement. In Mass, Catholic Charities was told that had to accept homosexual couples in the adoption service, so they quit.

Harvard Law professor Mary Ann Glendon wrote in 2004 about the same sex marriage debate. “There will be no live-and-let-live policy for those who differ. Gay marriage proponents use the language of openness, tolerance and diversity, yet one foreseeable effect of their success will to usher in an era of intolerance and discrimination. The ax will fall most heavily on religious persons and groups that don’t go along.” George Dent wrote in the Kentucky Law Journal, that “the goal of the gay movement is to confine its opponents in the closet.”

Decades of studies prove that children raised by a married mother and father in a low-stress marriage have the best physical, academic and social outcomes and the best chance to avoid social hazards like dropping out of school, illegal drug use and violent crimes.

2. Schuyler G. Anderson of Dover:

The main issue I wanted to bring up was how to respect your opinion. Everyone in this country, thanks to our founding fathers, was given the opportunity to not have to agree with everyone else. We have two kinds of law in this country, civil and laws that are concerned with religion. The issue of gay marriage is not the first time it has been dealt with. Massachusetts, Iowa, Connecticut, Maine, Vermont, and California (with approximately 14,000 proposition eights that have been turned back) as well as other countries such as Sweden, Belgium, Spain, Netherlands, Canada, South Africa, Norway, Uruguay, Buenos Ayres, and Mexico City that have all enacted very similar laws. The real issue is that we don’t have the same rights. We don’t even have to agree but we do have to respect each other and defend each other when ever that is necessary even those views you don’t except. I would only wish that people would recognize that my partner and I have been in a relationship for thirty four years, long than some people here have been alive. The issues previously discussed such as disease, illness, problems of life

success are part of the human condition. There are many people, straight, gay or whatever their orientations that suffer with diseases (which can be very cruel) are not choices they made individually. These are simply occurrences and facts. If we truly want to be citizens of the 21st century and leaving other issues behind us, we must remember that there were laws in this country which prevented blacks and other races from marrying. This was misogyny and highly defended by the church. We have many laws within church law that are contradictory. For instance, the Ten Commandments state “Thou shalt not kill” yet we support and defend our soldiers and others in the armed forces and give them the right to kill. Obviously there are contradictions. That’s why we have two types of law, civil and religious law. There is nothing wrong in a gay marriage that would require churches or any religious institution to perform ceremonies that they do not agree upon or are not part of their philosophy. Thank you.

3. Russell Murphy of Dover, representing the 912 Delaware Patriots:

My name is Russ Murphy; I am the Chairman of the 912 Delaware Patriots. I would like to thank the Dover Human Relations Committee and Dr. Hoff for this opportunity to address the Committee.

Speaking as the representative of the 912 DePats, my basic message is that the outcome of this issue dictates “officially and by “law” the morale code for the State of Delaware.

Such a proclamation should not be taken lightly, not only the citizens, but by the legislators upon whom at present the burden of responsibility rests to make a decision devoid of external pressure and/or self interest.

We have all seen where our elected officials pressured by one means or another have rushed to make a decision based not on factual evidence but on emotional clamor.

We believe that any bill that would reflect the morale code of the citizens should be decided by a ballot vote of the citizens. This is further re-enforced by the Supreme Courts recommendation that out of respect and consideration of the citizen’s morale values, ad decision regarding the issue would be better represented by a vote of the citizens rather than a Legislative Body that could be swayed or influenced by external pressures.

We would prefer t avoid what happened in Massachusetts where the Legislators took it upon themselves to decide the moral values for all, either by not knowing or ignoring the Supreme Courts recommendation and dismissing the citizens petition for a ballot vote.

This is still a government “of the people” “by the people” “for the people”. If our Legislators feel that they possess such a degree of reverent equanimity above that of the citizens and ignore our basic right to vote on this paramount issue, then the citizens have no other choice than to express their dissatisfaction in the 2010 elections.

Also as a precursor to 2010, contrary to what political pundits say, the voter’s dissatisfaction can be re-enforced and broadcasted by searching out a political party that reflects their values and principles, then change their party affiliation. Ladies and Gentlemen, this issue is beyond emotion and has constitutional value. The thing that has been overlooked is we the people run this government.

4. Bob Brown:

I am a retired Civil Engineer and I think it only proper that all people have the right to equal treatment, civil unions give that right. However, marriage goes far beyond that and is against all scriptural guidelines that have proven tried and true and trustworthy all my life. Scripture says that mankind will give up natural relations for unnatural. This is what gay marriage proposes. As an Engineer, there are natural and moral laws we live by and they work. For instance, can we in electricity disregard positive and negative charges? No, it is unnatural – so is gay marriage, plus it is also wrong. Life expectancy alone is vital proof to this issue, but in allowing their choice, we should never fore this on our society.

5. Robert Dennis of Dover:

What I see is happening all over the country. A small group of elected officials have place themselves as the highest authority within this country and they are making decisions that belong before the people which was expressed. We've heard some inaccuracies here, first, this is a country governed by a constitution and this is not a democracy, it is a republic which is a government of the people. When it is stated, as taught to our children for the last fifty years that it is a democracy, it gives you the authority. No, we are a republic, you work for us. How many members are on this committee? (Commission Bunkley answered there were fifteen members). How many of you are in the gay community and if you are, I suggest you do not vote on this issue because you have too much to gain. This is a vote that needs to go before the people. We are prepared to take this before the people and I'm hoping if necessary before the courts. We have rights and every one of us share the same rights under the constitution. We are a government of the majority. We have a Supreme Court which will judge those laws whether they take those rights away from any minority and if they don't, so be it minority. We the majority rule in this country. It was set up for a specific reason. If you change that then you give the certain small minority of people rights beyond the constitution and you give them rights that you don't give to me. Can I marry my dog, I'm heterosexual but I might want to marry my dog. Americans are getting frustrated with you people who supposedly represent the people. We're finding out and it is becoming very apparent that you truly don't represent us. On gentleman cited a statistic that only 3-4% of the nations of this world have gay marriage. We'll the people of this State are going to get educated and I think is this State is the wrong place for this issue to come up because I believe it will be voted down. I would suggest that every member of this council wisely listen to the people whom you've ignore for years, specifically our elected officials. I base all of my opinions on the Supreme Creator and it is an abomination in his eyes for gay relationships.

6. Michael Greenstreet:

As a father of fiver and grandfather of 11, I stand before you representing the children of Dover and the common sense parental teachings that have been passed from one generation to another over five thousand years.

This meeting is about a struggle between two opposing forces that wish to win the hearts of children. One camp believes in moral absolutes and wishes to pass to its posterity a

code of conduct, validated through thousands of years of human interactions, that states homosexual behavior isn't normal while the other camp wishes to instill a current day philosophy of relativism. Dr. Hoff's views are I this camp.

The ancient Greek philosophers generally concluded that there are three principal faculties in man: namely, the intellect, the spirit and the appetite. The appetite they said was what man desire at the moment such as food or sexual release.

Plato acknowledged an ideal republic was impossible for mortal men because he saw something self-destructive in appetite-driven, egotistical human behavior. By egotistical human behavior I mean the ethical belief that self-interest is the just and proper motive for all human conduct.

For six millennia, every human society has had homosexuals among them. Our American culture reflects many great ideas passed down to us from these past civilizations, but the idea that homosexual's behavior should be embraced is not one of them.

As adults, we often find our personal lives mired in the appetite of self-gratification that the Greeks spoke about; however, most of us sense in the deepest chambers of our souls that what we are doing is wrong. Therefore, though we struggle with our weaknesses, we steadfastly resolve in our hearts that at the very least we will be true to our children and strive to teach them the moral principles that we were taught in our youth and which we instinctively know are true.

While Dr. Hoff's motives might be genuine, make no mistake about it, the endgame for the majority of the homosexual community is to first, legitimize their deviant behavior, secondly, to indoctrinate every school-aged child, beginning incredibly in kindergarten, that the homosexual lifestyle is normal and, finally, one will see increased political pressure to lower the age of consent for anal-intercourse.

Homosexual behavior is not natural and the public outcry during the somewhat recent Catholic Church scandal of priests preying on boys in their trust is a heart breaking example.

A yes vote for Dr. Hoff's proposal will be a vote against the safety and welfare f our children and an affront to thousands of years of common sense parental instruction. Instead, please. Leave the innocent children alone and vote no.

7. Johnii Bothell:

Sometimes, where adults want to get what they want – the needs of children are compromised, and sometimes they are exploited. Their lives can be totally changed circumstances in which they are placed.

For instance, legalizing SSM strips children of the right NOT to be artificially conceived or adopted by people other than a Mother and a Father.

Indeed such legalization does not recognize that children have any right whatsoever to a mother and a father. To the contrary “Children are entitled to birth with the bonds of matrimony, and to be reared by a father and a mother who honor marital vows with complete fidelity.”

Marriage between a man and a woman is essential to God's eternal plan, and is the best method for raising healthy, happy and well-adjusted children, even though we all short of perfection in marriage and parenting.

The definition of marriage – divinely designed by God – is not up for human or government definition!

{ {A maxim which I would hope could find place in America is “People may have the right to live as they choose, but they don't have the right to redefine marriage for the rest of us!} }

I realize that for a good % of Same Sex Unions, children are an issue.

If government proceeds to redefine marriage, children will be at risk -Massachusetts has already passed “homosexual promotion legislation” by which as young as 5y/o are taught in government schools that h.s. relationships and marriage are acceptable and normal, and even make to appear desirable.

The tragedy of this is (1) confusion children feel – which is really never settled – as children instinctively have a need for a father and a mother, and (2) the propaganda received doesn't include the truth: those h.s. relationships incur significant health risks and even death for our children. Can we be confident that SSM is the ultimate goal? I believe the honest answer is “no”.

For where the notion that a relationship need affirming becomes a foundation for a “right” – beware – for what passes as “reasoning” this time will not do for the next claimant – who presents himself as needing government affirmation of his consensual relationship – whatever that might be – perhaps a NAMBLA claimant that man-boy relationships should be legalized as well.

This is not a slippery slope; it is a levee breaking a spring flood.

To the Commission I ask:

“If homosexuality becomes public policy issue which HB5 or SSM legislation would accomplish, then what other sexual acts will follow and be elevated to a protected class?”

Let me repeat the question,

Equality defined means “all receive equal benefits”. In my view, in order for this to happen – there has to be a level playing field. If Same Sex Marriage is legalized, the playing field will not be level for children. They will always lose.

If the people of Delaware were aware of the consequences of SSM would present in their state, they would want to vote on it.

8. Michael Von Reider of Dover:

I whole heartedly support this resolution but propose one change, replace the final four words with, “irrespective of gender”. To use the words “sexual preference” makes two

bad assumptions: the first being that all is based primarily in sexual activity and that in a true loving relationship which can sustain itself over a life time is based on more than that (sexual activity). Secondly, I certainly have not shared my life, my love or all the ups and downs that life brings with the love of my life for almost thirty years based on a preference. I simply fell in love and had no choice but to follow my heart and be who God made me. In that vein, I have deeply held religious beliefs which have been garnered for many years in this community and my travels throughout the world. I've attended churches that support same-gender marriages. To help government choose which religious beliefs to base their civil laws, the answer is there is no single doctrine to base their laws upon because this country is made up of many different religions. I would never deny anyone the right to follow their heart and their mind based on religious belief as long as those beliefs are right and not forced on anyone else.

Another reason we hear so much anti-gay rhetoric and why so many groups try to prevent gays from having basic civil rights. The argument being that being gay is a choice and therefore does not represent the true minority deserving of any extra civil rights. If it is a choice, then tell me, on what day does an emerging pubescent teenager wake up and say, "OK, will I live my life as a heterosexual or as a same-gender orientation." Sound ridiculous, of course it is. You never have a choice; you just naturally develop an attraction for the opposite or same gender. When you're a teenager, you develop an awakening realization of your innate attraction. The only choice any of us has is to accept our true selves as God made us or fight against for a lifetime, a battle which will ruin your life as well as the lives of innocent people around you as we try to fool ourselves into being something we're not. Do we have the ability to change our orientation, I may be able to hide who I am and be opposite gender oriented but that would be living a lie but in the depths of my soul, I would still be same-gender oriented. I could no more choose to be heterosexual than you could choose to be gay. Please support this resolution and grant equality for all.

9. Al May from Dover:

We are being asked to endorse what the commission is calling civil union most would call reckless, extraordinary sexual behavior. The type of behavior that shortens lives through contracting of sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV, hepatitis A, B or C, human papilloma virus in males. Higher prevalence of bacterial vaginosis, hepatitis C, and HIV in women. Increased risk of mental illness such as major depression, general anxiety disorder, and conduct disorder, multiple disorders, suicidal ideation, and suicide attempts. Higher rates of substance abuse such as illicit drugs, alcohol and tobacco. This behavior is a harmful addition and this Commission is asking the citizens of our Dover Community to pressure our state government into facilitating this addition. This behavior is not a civil right requiring special protection. Let us not be fooled into believing it to be innocuous. If we allow this sickness to permeate our society, our children will learn to accept it. Their children will learn to practice it. The eventual result will be diminished numbers of traditional marriage resulting in non-procreation. At that time there will be no one left to argue the point.

10. Reverend Gary Baldwin of Dover:

I've listened to a lot of what has been said and the main thing that I believe that stands out to everyone here is dealing with children. How do we explain to children that

something that we want to call love between two people and not really get to the nuts and bolts of what happens between those two people. We always like to overlook and sugarcoat what is really happening. I heard someone mention the Catholics, over a third of those who committed atrocities had been molested themselves. Many, many adults today have gone through the painstaking events of what has happened to them in their early years. I'm not a psychologist or a licensed counselor, but no one can tell me why when something is perpetrated on a person that they in turn become the perpetrator. There are so many things we have to deal with when we talk about gay marriage. I have talked to Senator Bushwheller at a forum when he came to someone's home on HB5 and one of the things said was that 100% of the time when this sort of resolution passes, gay marriage follows. He said we have something in place that will take care of that and I've heard it mentioned here today, the defense of marriage act. However no one is looking at those that are married from other states that have come here to settle down, that when they decide to get a divorce and they go before a court, if some Judge decides to make this a legal contract and gives them their divorce, guess what, we've allowed same-sex marriage. Will we stand by it? We have to look at our children first. I heard someone say that in the school systems that we as parents don't have any rights as to what our children are indoctrinated into. We have books, that I have looked at and I would say no child age seven or ten should look at under the guise of biology. There are things in there that we cannot even look at without turning our heads because it looks like pornography. So we have to be careful of what we as a society decides to say we are going to accept. Yes, I am a man of faith and I believe same-sex marriage is wrong. I believe homosexuality is wrong, I believe a man and woman having sex outside of marriage is wrong. So we have to be very careful that we don't bypass what the people want and we for some reason, I don't know we're steam-rolling this thing, but we're really trying to get this thing put thru very, very fast and not allow people to at least make an informed decision. Thank you.

11. Timothy Pancoast:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Thank you for allowing me some time to speak before you on the issue of this gay marriage resolution. All of my life I have heard the phrase "a separation of church and state" often from people who wish to leave the impression that it comes from the Constitution and its amendments. Most of my life I have been aware that such is not the case. Those words are not found in the Constitution but rather originate from a letter written by Thomas Jefferson to the Danbury Baptists. Today we discuss a resolution, that won't just contribute to the impotence of freedom of religion as protected by the 1st Amendment, but also breaches the "wall" of separation of church and state which Justice Hugo Black unfortunately created from Thomas Jefferson's words, I say unfortunately because President Jefferson himself would be outraged to see how his words are used today and in the process of erecting that wall Justice Black fired the first volley through it. Nowhere in his letter and nowhere in Justice Black's ruling did they advocate establishing a conflict between church and state? Yet here we are today to discuss a resolution of Doctrine that is in direct conflict and competition with the established doctrine of churches and the traditional American view of marriage. Such conflict cannot occur without breaching the wall of separation. So religion and government have been brought together not to affirm and support one another but to do battle against each other

Now I must ask Why? What does this proposed resolution and the intended legislation offer that justifies such a conflict.

Why does the City license marriage?

If it is about love then I ask what business does a city or any government have licensing love, sexual relations or any other personal bond? Where did it get such power and authority? If such is the case I am ready to stand up and fight for that authority to be stripped from the government and returned to the people.

If it is about rights and privileges then I say draft up legislation that confers rights and benefits an all people equally, but don't change the doctrine of marriage.

Unfortunately that is not what has been done. Instead we are before the Commission discussing a resolution which establishes an impasse between groups which effectively defeats the purpose for this Commission as stated in the resolution itself, the 5th paragraph states that the Commission "fosters positive human relations, intergroup cooperation, and tolerance of different ideas." However, I only see one group represented in this resolution and I only see one side's ideas presented by it. And this in such way as to alienate and even tramples the ideas of other groups.

The first paragraph is not a statement about rights, equal benefits or responsibilities. Instead it declares anew doctrine on marriage that is opposed to the doctrine of my faith and many others. Not to mention it is contrary to the tradition of this state and country.

The second paragraph attempts to establish a false dilemma. It attempts to frame the choice such that we either have marriage with equal rights and responsibilities or we have civil unions without equal rights and responsibilities. Such is not the case unless we make it so.

The third paragraph seems like an appeal to join the bandwagon. It seeks to have Delaware follow other states in legislating homosexual marriage. Well, Delaware is the First State for reason and this is not because it followed Massachusetts, Iowa, Vermont, Connecticut, or Maine. We made our choice to join the union and sign the Constitution based on the merits, not upon playing follow the leader. We should uphold that tradition and choose for ourselves, not based on what other states are doing. The argument that we should follow a few states into licensing homosexual marriage holds even less weight when you consider that far more states are doing the opposite and upholding traditional marriage.

The fourth paragraph returns to espousing new doctrine for marriage and as I said before the 5th paragraph states the worthy goal of this Commission which this resolution, in my opinion fails to promote. I hope that this Commission can see the folly of this resolution and instead turn to measure that will actually help realize its purpose of positive human relations. Therefore I recommend this resolution be withdrawn and I would propose that rather a meeting such as this one be called for the community to come together and actually respond to the purpose of this Commission and propose a resolution that supports the entire community. We're all neighbors and I don't look down on anyone here and I think we should be able to voice our opinions about what we agree upon and not what we disagree upon. Thank you.

12. Reverend Richard Avant:

I am Pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church, approximately 700 members and President of the Inter-dominion Ministerial Alliance, approximately 8,000 members. I speak on their behalf and say to the Council that we are against the proposal that is being made of same-sex marriage. Our concern is our children which have already been expressed; our concern is also the authority that the Dover Human Relations Commission seems to be taking. HB5 has already been turned down in the Legislature. Be that as it may, we are here today, and I'm so happy to see so many of us here, to voice our opinion against what is being perpetuated in this Council. Our eyes are open and I think you've heard enough technical voices that have given you statistics. Children do not fare well in same-sex homes, children develop where they have a mother and a father and on that basis we come here today to tell you that we stand against this proposal.

13. Nicole Theis:

I am the Executive Director of Delaware Family Policy Council. DFPC is a statewide alliance of thousands of individuals and organizations who advocate for strengthening the family through educating and equipping for healthy marriage and intentional parenting, life and religious liberties issues.

We believe that children need both a Mom and a Dad. Social science overwhelmingly supports that children are most healthy and strong when being raised by mom and dad. As a matter of public policy, this ideal should be elevated whenever possible by those entrusted with legislating for common good.

Same-sex marriage is genderless marriage. We ask the Commission this" Is allowing genderless marriage foe the common good of Delawareans.

Genderless marriage, removing or re-defining the boundaries of marriage, has a direct impact on children. When you say gender has no role in marriage, you saying that gender is unimportant, that the specific roles of mom and dad are insignificant. The value as male or female is meaningless.

This is not a decision that has to do with legislating what people determine as love. When you talk about changing laws and statutes, it is a matter of public policy. Because this is a matter of public policy and because public policy is taught in the classroom, we do not support our young children being taught that their gender means that they are either a carrier or a donor - that's it, and the rest is a matter of civil rights. This is exactly the message that has hit many of our public schools in the nation, supported by the National Education Association, and therefore is quickly becoming the identity of the next generation. We will see this confusion like a tsunami of same-sex/genderless marriage is approved and legalized in Delaware.

Commissioners, if you recommend genderless marriage for the City of Dover, and for our State, on behalf of Delaware Family Policy Council, I ask you this: Who are you deciding that children should do without, a Mom or Dad?

14. Reverend Anthony Wallace:

Not long ago I spoke before both housed of the Delaware Legislature twice and there was not the civil atmosphere as there is here and that is to the credit of everyone here. We were treated badly and the Legislators seemed to have already made up their minds. I

www.frc.org). As to the resolution, I too am a Preacher, Cross Roads Christian Church, whereas marriage between two individuals should be based on love and not consider those two persons, I disagree. The Bible says God is love, love is the order of God and here for must follow his descriptive and imperatives concerning love. Marriage is an institution widely accepted in our society as a Biblical foundation and indeed as a foundation for our civilization. Whereas marriage furnishes rights and responsibilities to spouses which are not fully recognized by civil union. I've heard people talk about their loving relationship (and more power to them). Had a home, had a job, had a career, had happiness, no one's in the back of the bus, no one is being lynched from a tree, none of that is happening, meaning our atmosphere is pretty civil around here in this society in and out of respective churches. Most importantly, where five states have officially approved gay marriage and several others recognize their status transferred from other states (which you mentioned in the beginning) but I don't want to be lost on anyone here, thirty states have amended their constitution to ban same-sex marriage. I want this noted and heard. I also add that in the five states where it has been approved by judicial legislation, the people have not spoken. Be it resolved that the Dover Human Relations Commission urges the Mayor and the City Council to take a stand in support of gay marriage, I ask that you withdraw it and put in its place a resolution calling for a valid initiative where people can speak and I ask for the same thing in the House and the Senate. Find out what the people are saying. I think this is the only fair way to resolve this issue. Thank you.

15. Jordan Wartel of Greenwood:

I respectfully disagree with your prelude to this forum. I don't think this even a legitimate issue for the DHRC to even bring up. I understand correctly the purpose of this Commission is to bring unity to different groups of people and bring resolution and reconciliation between them. The way I see it, this issue, especially the way this resolution was written, it isn't going to bring reconciliation instead it will bring division. By bringing this up at frankly bad timing in our Nation's history especially with what's happening in New England and California, I just feel this is the best time or place to be doing this. I would instead recommend you bring up resolutions which bring us together rather than divide us. Thank you for your time.

16. Nancy Panico from Wilmington:

I worked with children and youth in the state of Delaware as school psychologist for 22 years. I began my career in the early 1980's and retired in 2003. Throughout these years I saw a significant increase in the number of children and youths having serious mental health issues, such as: major depression, suicide attempts, anxiety disorder, and bipolar disorder and drug abuse. Educators today are well aware of the significant mental health issues that children face in our schools. One often hears people talk about the "state of our schools" in Delaware, why children are not learning, why there are so many problem, etc. It is true, children today do suffer from more mental health issues and the impact on society as whole is greater than ever before. Studies show that one of the major areas of

difference between homosexual and heterosexual relationships is in the area of mental health. Multiple studies have identified high rates of psychiatric illness, including depression, drug abuse and suicide attempts among self professed gays and lesbians. We already know that states that have passed HB% and SSM an added SSM and homosexuality to curriculums that teach and promote this type of lifestyle. Looking at the statistics, which show increased mental health issues in homosexual relationships, why would we want to teach our children about a lifestyle that we know directly impacts their mental health? Children and youth today already experience numerous emotional problems that affect their academic success and ability to function in society. Why would we take the risk of further increasing the mental health problems we see in our children today by introducing a lifestyle that we know increases mental health problems? Consider these facts and then ask yourselves: who are the real victim here.

17. Eric Bodenweiser of Georgetown:

I want to thank the Commission for the opportunity to speak. I am only a humble servant of the one true God. As I first began reading the resolution I stopped to look up the definition of the word “whereas”. It means “in view of the fact”. I had a hard time getting pat that first word. This entire resolution is simply a statement of opinions. It has no more validity than my own opinion. Therefore, here is a copy of the resolution I feel we should be discussing today.

Whereas, marriage between two individuals should be between one man and one woman that love each other as intended by God in our natural world;

Whereas, marriage furnishes rights and responsibilities that are fully recognized through and by the absolute authority of God in his word, our holy Bible;

Whereas, the gay citizens of Dover are legally able to cohabit if that is their choice’

Whereas, while the Dover Human Relations Commission should foster positive human relations, intergroup cooperation and tolerance of different ideas should not be trying to pressure our state legislature to pass legislation detrimental to our society’s well being;

Now therefore be it resolved, the Dover Human Relations Commission urges the Mayor and the City Council to take a stance in support of the traditional marriage as the sole, God authorized union, to be held up now and forever as being between one man and one woman and to advocate for a passage of a law forever limiting it as such in Dover and also as an Amendment to the state of Delaware’s Constitution.

18. Rodel Valenzuela:

I am a business owner in the City of Dover. I represent a growing minority of Philipino – Americans in this City.

I am going to tell you a short story...

In 2006, in the state of Massachusetts, there lived married couple and their young 7 year old son. One day their son came home from school talking about a story that was read to him in his 2nd grade classroom. This story was about two kings that married each other

and lived happily ever after. The couple was alarmed to discover that their 7 year old son was being taught about a sex related topic against their wishes. This couple politely requested that the school notify them before they introduced their son to anything about sexuality. The believed that a young child should live a carefree life, free to enjoy his childhood without worrying about sex. This was their personal conviction. The school refused to obey their wishes and in March of 2006 the couple was forced to go to the first district court of Massachusetts to plead their case. Surely the Judge would rule in their favor to protect their first amendment rights. The court ruled against the couple.

What's more, in the ruling the Judge suggested that the state should always have the opportunity to teach children these things before they have the chance to make up their own minds.

In desperation the Mother stated "...we sincerely wanted to just protect our children while they are children..." but they were denied that right.

The name of this couple is Robb and Robin Wirthlin. And the book "King and King" was read to their son. This is just one example of hundreds. If you need more I will provide them to you.

Religious freedom is the first and most fundamental right of American, protected in the Bill of Rights. It is the most basic and inalienable of all rights.

Sexual liberty cannot (and we know that line will be crossed) exist alongside of religious liberty. If the resolution proposed by the Commission is passed, and subsequently gay marriage is brought to Delaware, our religious freedoms will be lost. Cases like this are being litigated all over the Country. Is this committee prepared to threaten the first amendment rights of Delaware's citizens

Ladies and Gentlemen: you can believe in religious liberty for all and you can believe in same-sex marriage; but you cannot believe in both?

19. David Anderson (Dr. Hoff acknowledged Mr. Anderson as a former member of the DHRC):

Thank you for the opportunity to address this body since I was mentioned by name in a letter to the editor by a member, I decided to personally make my case. I commend the Commission for bringing an issue to the public and I don't fault anyone for that but I hope the Commission, in view of the will of the people considers its institutional integrity or it could undermine its ability and its leadership role in the community if it's not seen as reflecting the values of the community.

I am concerned that the resolution before you though well intentioned is based upon a flawed premise. It is based upon the belief that love is something to be legislated and in the absence of legislation there is some sort of injury. I am sympathetic to the historic proscriptions often found in law against homosexual couples. However the recognition of marriage as mixed sex institution which ensure the stable continuation of humanity, is not one such proscription. We did not recognize marriage even before written history because it was the only way people could love one another. We did it because a married family takes on a unique responsibility for all of us by committing to form a stable family. That family unit continues to be the basis of civilization in societies of all religions, ethnic

groups and geographic locations. Marriage unites humanity. In spite of some differences, it is a mixed gender institution recognizable around the world.

The reason certain “benefits” are given is not to reward one group of people over all others. It is not to idealize love. It is to compensate for the high cost and sacrifice realized by families. Since society benefits to the degree of its very survival in its current form based upon the family, recognizing the contribution people make who make a lifelong commitment to children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren is not unreasonable. Since humanity is dependent upon the procreation celebrated by marriage, enshrining its unique a noble status into law is only natural.

People should be free to choose their relationships, and they are. I believe there is a difference between demanding legal recognition of a relationship and allowing people to choose with whom they have relationships. Recognizing a person’s right to choose does not mandate a right to recognition. Supreme Court of the United States already addressed this issue in *Lawrence vs. Texas*.

“The Statutes do seek to control a personal relationship that, whether or not entitled to formal recognition in the law, is within the liberty of persons to choose without being punished as criminals. This, as a general rule, should counsel against attempts by the State, or a court, to define the meaning of the relationship or to set its boundaries absent injury to a person or abuse of an institution the law protects. It suffices for us to acknowledge that adults may choose to enter upon this relationship in the confines of their homes and their own private lives and still retain their dignity as free persons.

Another issue is does homophobia enter into a person’s position on marriage? It can. If someone has an intense distrust of homosexuals, then obviously that person would not favor same sex marriage. My personal view is that the mere holding of that view does not make a person “homophobic”.

Margaret Sommerville who is known to be for laws favoring gay rights, wrote the following in a court brief in Canada:”Recognizing that a fundamental purpose of marriage is to engender respect for the transmission of human life provides a corollary insight: Excluding same-sex couples from marriage is not related to those people’s homosexual orientation, or to them as individuals, or to the worth of their relationships. Rather, the exclusion of their relationship is related to the fact that it is not inherently procreative, and therefore, if it is encompassed within marriage, marriage cannot institutionalize and symbolize respect for the transmission of life. To recognize same-sex marriage (which is to be distinguished from same-sex partnerships that not raise this Problem) would unavoidably change and eliminate this function of marriage.”

She further stated:”Being against (same-sex marriage is frequently alleged by proponents of same-sex marriage to be proof of homophobia (See “Same-sex hearings fife with ‘gay bashing,’ critic says”, *Globe and Mail*, 11 March, 2003, A5). A useful comparison can be made with people who take the view that being against infant male circumcision (IMC) is proof of anti-Semitism. (I, personally, have been subject to both sets of allegations in the public square.)

The strategy adopted in both cases is to shame those who are against same-sex marriage or IMC into silence. The choice of language and forming of the issues is carefully crafted to achieve this result. (See William Eskridge, who has articulated important insights in

this respect, through his analysis of the techniques use by identity-based social movements to place courts in the position that they see their only alternatives in reaching a decision as being either to find discrimination or to believe that in not doing so they would be approving of discrimination and themselves engaging I it. In the same vein, see Halpern et alv. Canada and arguments considered by the judges.)”

20. Pastor John Bowman:

I am a Children’s Pastor and I ma I contact with several hundred children in Kent County. I have seen the direct effect on the many children in Kent County that do not have a “Father “figure in the home. When there is no “Dad” (which is what this bill proposes) because as earlier stated there will be on gender) there is no one to show our kids how a man should act as a responsible member of society.

Children from home where there is n “Father” to account for:

- i. 63% of youth suicides come from fatherless homes
- ii. 70% of juveniles in state-operated institutions come from fatherless homes
- iii. 71% of pregnant teenagers come from fatherless homes
- iv. 71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes
- v. 75% of all adolescent patients in chemical abuse centers come from fatherless homes
- vi. 80% of rapists motivated with displaced anger come from fatherless homes
- vii. 85% of all children that exhibit behavioral disorders come from fatherless homes
- viii. 85% of all youths sitting in prisons come from fatherless homes

You see marriage provides mothers and fathers for children and healthy children define a growing/healthy society. Marriage is the way we ensure the next generation grows up with the irreplaceable benefit of their mother and father. A loving and compassionate society comes to the aid of the motherless and the fatherless which I believe we are, we care about the fatherless and the orphans. A loving compassionate society does not intentionally rob a child of a mother or father. But this is what every same-sex home does and will do – and for other reason but to satisfy adult desire! Social experimentation on children is unacceptable! It is a fact that children do best with Mom and dad (by what social science tells us). IN the Lesbian Parenting Book, the authors admit that in founding lesbian homes, “our Children are not the only ones who may find themselves in uncharted territory.” Notice the word “uncharted territory.” That sounds like another word for “experiment.” And here’s what they say about what it would mean to raise boys in lesbian homes: It will be interesting to see over time whether lesbians’ sons have an easier or harder time developing their gender identity than boys with live-in fathers. The key phrase:”it will be interesting to see.” We live in a warning label society – warning labels everywhere tell us no animals were harmed in the testing of this or that particular product or warns us of potential harm. But the warning label on the same-sex family is “it will be interesting to see.”

Are willing to put our children at risk and find it “interesting” by allowing them to become some kind of experiment?” That is what this bill will do.

21. Shaun Fink of Millsboro:

Allow me to begin my testimony with a quote from a woman named Janet Lessin, “We should have every right to inherit from each other and visit each other – I don’t care what you call, we’re not second-class citizens! Any people who wish to form a marriage withal the rights and duties of marriage should have the legal right to. The spurious arguments of marriage being for procreation of children is ridiculous.” Now it may seem to anyone listening that I am quoting someone from the homosexual community, concerned that their equality as citizens and human beings be taken seriously. But in fact, I am not quoting someone from the homosexual community; rather Janet Lessin is from the Polyamorous Community. For anyone who may not be familiar with these individuals, they are a growing group who believe in multiple partner (or triad) marriages. They consider their love for both of their partners to be as valid as love for my wife, and the love of any homosexual couple that happens to be in this room tonight. If we allow same-sex marriage, can we then forbid these multiple partners their desire when they too come seeking for the right to marry? As a governing body, I implore you to truly consider the full scope of consequence your decision will result in. Can we begin to calculate the cost to government if we allow anyone to marry anyone for any reason or desire? The role of government is, among other things, to promote the public welfare. In order to do that, a governing body must be prudent and wise; not willing to give into every demand placed upon it. Please allow me one more quote, this one is from Janet Lessin’s same-sex partner Sasha Lessin; they legally married in the year 2000. The quote is in reference to a man, named Shivaya, whom both of them would like to marry, together, at the same time. I know it gets confusing, but bear with me. Sasha says, “I want to walk down the street hand in hand in hand in hand and live together openly and proclaim our relationship, but also to have all those survivor and visitation rights and tax breaks and everything like that.”

The question you face is not an issue of equality or protection; it is a simple matter of economics. When you consider the cost of shared healthcare, tax breaks, inheritance tangles, and survivor benefits; the amounts become staggering. If same-sex marriage is allowed, then so too is everything else; and we cannot afford it. My question to you is, “Knowing the far-reaching impact of the decision you will make on this issue, are you willing to simply roll the dice?” Another argument gay activists like to make is that their civil rights are violated because homosexuals can’t marry whom they want. This argument is flawed because heterosexuals can’t marry whomever they want, either. If a man fell in love with his sister, his daughter or his female first cousin, or any combination of the three, society would prohibit him from marrying them as well. Marriage is not a civil right, rather an institution established for the purpose of promoting healthy families. And it is in the government’s best interest to maintain the healthiest families possible.

22. Cheryl Precourt:

Many times I have heard the statement, “The right to marry whomever you wish is a fundamental civil right.” Some people have asked, “Is same-sex marriage like interracial marriage?” Same-sex marriage and interracial marriage nothing alike. Marriage of one man, one woman has been proven to be a profound social good. Racism was about power and suppression – about keeping races apart and that is wrong.

Marriage is about bringing male and female together, and that is good. Marriage has

nothing to do with race. It has everything to do with a husband and a wife working together to create and care for the next generation. Allowing interracial marriage confirmed marriage by saying that any race of man has a right to marry any race of woman. Same-sex on the other hand redefines marriage because it says that men and women are optional for the family.

It is also one thing for a child to say, “I have a black mom and a white dad” than to say “I have two moms and no father.” There is no research showing interracial parenting is developmentally harmful to children, but there are thousands of studies indicating that children are hindered developmentally when they are denied a mother and a father.

When the first same-sex marriage ceremony was performed in Provincetown, Massachusetts, Jonathan Yarbrough and Cody Rogahn spoke with the media about their relationship saying, “I think it’s possible to love more than one person and have more than one partner...In our case, it is. We have an open marriage.”

What if Jonathan and Cody want to include more than one person in their marriage? When Cheryl Jacques, former director of the homosexual group Human Right Campaign was asked why same-sex marriage wouldn’t lead to multiple-party marriages (or triads) she said, “Because I don’t approve of that.”

So I ask: Why would her disapproval of polygamy be more reasonable than my disapproval of same-sex marriage?

23. Dennis Wilson of Dover:

This meeting this evening is all about rights! I think we all agree, that, there is certain, God given, unalienable rights, that each person has been given. But just what are these rights? If these “rights” are truly, “God given” then I would think, that in the considering of resolutions or new laws, one would want to know what God thinks about that particular subject. I am here this evening to encourage you to look into the word of God, the Bible, to obtain wisdom and understanding of what God has to say concerning homosexuality. I am not going to quote every scripture on this subject but want to point out to everyone here that whole cities were destroyed by God over these practices. The City of Sodom, by which we get the word sodomy, was completely burned up, destroyed by God because of these practices. This is found in Genesis Chapter 19. Leviticus, Chapter 8 verse 22 says, “You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination.” Beginning with the 26th verse of the first Chapter in Book of Romans, I quote, “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature.”

Unless, good, Godly laws are made and enacted in our City, we too can expect God’s hand of blessing to withdraw from us. There are many scripture verses regarding this subject so I respectfully urge you, to check God’s word before you consider making resolutions or laws that can and will be destructive to the City of Dover. Thank you for our time.

24. Dawn Valladarses: (Ms. Valladarses introduced her daughters and commended the young people in the audience who attended this evening’s meeting).

I am a stay at home Mom who invests greatly in my kids who this resolution is directed and I'm anxious because the consequences are unknown but I speculate the will be tremendous. I guard very carefully what my girls are exposed to, it would be easy to stick them in front of the television but I don't do that, I'm not impressed with what's out there and how it will impact them. I'm concerned for them and their friends because we don't know and just look at this as individual rights before us but we have to expect that if we make this decision, the policy holders or the people should come to us. We are ultimately responsible for the consequences of this decision for the next generation. I can't let that happen on my watch. I think that is scary. I don't want that to happen in my children's lifetime or their children's lifetime. I greatly believe in tolerance for people's choices, there is no one here I hold ill will for their choices. I think adults are free to make their choices and I too make bad choices and must live with the consequences. But when we start saying it's expectable and society finds it expectable than it sends a message to children that's very influential and I don't want it to happen on my watch. I also want to apologize because we speak about how children need a Mom and Dad at home and those of us who are married have done a lousy job keeping Mom and Dad at home. So it's hard for us to be out here preaching against someone else when we've failed. So please don't think we are holier-than-thou than those who want to same-sex unions. Therefore I humbly ask let's not think about the adults here but the kids and the unknown consequences and the other groups that will follow.

25. Calley Doty from Dover:

I wanted to make sure you knew about many of the research that has been out there from 1991 to present day there is no scientific or DNA test to prove if a person is homosexual, bisexual or heterosexual and since nobody is born gay it is clear that special orientation is at its core how one defines themselves. It's not a matter of genes or biology. This is probably the synapse of six research things that are the composite of interesting research. Two of these are by homosexual men, who consider environment important to the research. Most recently the Gay and Lesbian task Force admitted in an ABC news story that today's young lesbians and bisexuals had a more flexible view about sexuality and see it as a normal thing. Already, they are done in for. I just wanted to present you with scientific data to help you make this decision.

26. Victor Hendricks from Delaware:

I've been listening to everyone's comments (my son is over there) and he hit me on my side and asked "Dad, are we going to say anything?" and really I didn't have anything to say but if I don't speak to anyone else in this room, I want to speak to my son because I don't want him to be confused about this matter. First of all, I want to say if you are homosexual or a lesbian and you are in this room then first of all, we love you. That is not to belittle you or make you feel anything other than loved. We can no more agree with your decision then we would want to legalize murder or anything else that is against the law. This for us, as Christians is against the law and we can't stand it. If you happen to be confused on the matter when God created Adam, he said it is not good for a man to be all one. It is not good for him to be alone. So I'm going to create someone to help him, someone who will be along his side when he laid Adam down, and He pulled the rib out of Adam, he pulled all the woman that was in Adam. So there is no confusion about who you are. When He pulled all the woman out of Adam, He pulled out all the woman out and left a man as all of a man.

27. Shauna Arisenoult:

I am a student at PolyTech High School and I'm bisexual. I don't see why there is such a problem. My problem is why you people who claim to love each other abide by the rules. Why is this a problem? I come from a Fatherless home but is that to say that all the blame should be put on Mothers? I think I turned out fine. I make straight A's and obey all the rules and this is who life made me. Are you married? If you are married and love your partner, why can't I love her too? If a person is not married, why can't another love them. Every person in this room has had gay thoughts and ever looked at porn or touched yourself then that is a gay issue. People think that if you're gay that you bring corruption. I've had gay and straight teachers and I live in a straight community but this is who I am. I'm part of a new generation, and you should be asking what we want.

28. Winfred Duffie:

To refer back to Victor Hendricks, let us not be confused, marriage is the way God himself created it and many may not believe in the Bible (the truth). The Bible that many of you may have put your hands on to swear you would uphold the truth. That same Bible has been the same since its inception and is the inspiring word of God has never changed and never will change. It is not like a constitution that can be amended, but the Bible, the one word of God (the truth) that endorse through every generation and it is the air whether we believe it or not. God created a man and a woman to be married that is the truth. That has been set before you on this Council, choose life not death. There are opinions and a way that seems right to people who have opinions about this and that. This person thinks this is right and that person thinks that is right and I'm passionate about my opinion. But there is only one opinion that really counts, that is the truth that has endured from the beginning of time and which will endorse through eternity. There is only one truth, so let us choose life today. Please rescind the resolution and choose what you know God has put on the inside of you to be true.

29. Steven Wilson:

I want to speak from a teenagers view point. I am eighteen years old. I'm very involved with my church, and Jesus Christ who died on the cross for us is my savior. For the younger people, don't be confused. Two men can't create a child and don't be confused by what the world tries to present you. The world is attempting to brainwash our children with this thinking. If you continue to allow this thinking, these gay marriages will eventually get to the point to think this is OK. We cannot procreate in this way. Two men cannot create a child or two women. The Bible says that it is good for a man to be with a woman not with a man. I encourage you to look into your Bible as others have said. I've worked with kids from my church and once a boy came up to a boy, ten years old and asked if he could lay with me. He asked me what I should say. You put us as parents in these situations, what do we tell our children and what can we say? We direct them to the truth of the Bible and hope that they are woke up that way instead of in the way the TV presents to us. So, again, I tell the kids, don't be confused. This is from the enemy, confusion is from Satan himself. I'm speaking from an eighteen year olds stand point and I know what I'm talking about. So, don't let the confusion go any further. This world is on its way to destruction if you allow this to pass. I encourage you for the benefit of the youths. You are not the next generation, stop thinking about yourselves. We are bringing up the next generation. Let's open up our minds and think about this. Is this what we

want for our young people, is this what we want to see. As one man said, eventually there won't be any more life. We can't keep going on like this that is the bottom line. Stop confusing the issue, a ten year old girl was afraid to go to school because another girl said she would do things with her. These are ten year olds. Eventually they'll be so brainwashed they won't even know until they think it's OK. It is wrong and is from the enemy. I say choose God, your personal Christ and let him lead the way.

30. Janet Crandall:

I honestly didn't come here to speak but to listen but I felt really moved to make a comment. We need to go back to the basics, family and of society. Legislation is good and representatives are good. I understand representatives represent nine to ten thousand people. There is no way we can have a bill of this magnitude that impacts this basic unit. There is no way a person representing ten thousand people can adequately represent the people and how they feel. It should be taken to the polls. It should be a voting issue and majority rules and left up to legislation. Thank you very much for your time.

i. Three written responses to the Gay Marriage Resolution by Community Members who could not attend:

Hello. My partner and I would like to attend tonight's meeting to support a gay marriage resolution. However, we have a 7 year old daughter and no sitter. We are not naïve; we know there are those who hate us because they do not understand us. We will not expose our daughter to the hate filled opinions of others who are sure to voice their opposition. We are hoping this can be read as a statement during comments. If not, then please let the committee know that there are those who are in favor of an equal rights marriage law.

We are American citizens and hard working productive members of Delaware's society. We go to work, pay taxes, own a house and raise a family the same as other married couples. We suffer from the same issues of a bad economy, from the threat of layoffs, pay cuts and job loss. We worry about our child, help her with her homework, take her to ballet and dance class, read to her at night and wonder what she will be when she grows up. All the same issues any other married couples with children face. We don't see how our being "married" can affect anyone else's marriage. Married couples live all around us and they have no bearing on our life together and we have none on theirs. Gay marriage is not a religious issue. If marriage was strictly religious with the only goal of marriage, procreation, then there would be no need for legal protection for husbands and wives. There would be no divorce law. Marriage would be under the rules of each person's church. But that is clearly not the case as many married couples are not married in a religious ceremony and many marriages do not produce children. We consider ourselves married. Our family, friends and co-workers all consider us married. Only the government does not consider us married. We therefore have no protection under the law. It's time now to recognize us as other do and provide us with the same rights and benefits.

Thank you for your time. We pray that someday soon all married Delawareans will have the same legal rights and protection allowed to them.

Jennifer L. Myer, Dover, DE and Sally A. Childears, Dover, DE

ii. Dear Members of the Human Relations Commission:

Unfortunately, I am unable to attend your meeting on May 27. I do want my thoughts known on this important issue, so I have composed this letter to you. I respectfully ask that its contents be placed into the minutes of your meeting. I have also sent copies of the letter to members of the City Council.

I strongly oppose the Commission's resolution that "urges the Mayor and City Council to take a stand in support of gay marriage as a human right and to advocate for passage of a law permitting gay marriage in Dover and throughout the State of Delaware."

Fundamentally, I oppose this measure because I believe gay marriage is a bad idea. This is not a comment on gay behavior, but a rejection of gay marriage. For some thirty years I studied and taught about various societies and cultures. All of them created some formal bonds of marriage because marriage is a fundamental institution. It addressed(s) the basic needs to promote the successful raising of children, sanction the special bond between a particular male and female, and to protect the property rights of participants, among other things.

Historically, marriage has been defined as a formal bond between individuals of different genders. Sometimes this bond was based on family status, love or affection, a desire for citizenship rights, to settle clan disputes, or any number of other reasons, but it always was between people of different genders. No society, at any prior time in history or in any location on Earth that I know of, has ever legalized homosexual unions. Many societies have allowed homosexual activities, often openly, but none that I know of, have sanctioned homosexual marriage.

Also, marriage is not a human right, it is a social institution. According to our founding documents, human rights are not the result of government activity, but are "endowed by our Creator". Nowhere that I know of did any of the founders make any statements lamenting the absence of gay marriage or encouraging it. They did however argue over other areas of early American life in which real rights were being denied. They did not always resolve these issues, but many expressed their opinions on the subjects. There was no such dialogue over gay marriage.

It seems odd to me, that a small group of people in "Dover would presume to have wisdom greater than the collective wisdom of the ages. It seems nearly outrageous to me, for this group to encourage its City Council to promote something that until very recently was unheard of in human experience. And what power does our City Council have to permit gay marriage in Dover if it is not permitted in the State? Why should Dover be in the Forefront of the gay marriage issue? Marriage laws have always been the prerogative of the State governments, not the local or federal ones.

In addition, I have reservations about much of the preamble of the resolution. The first and fourth statements are merely the Commission's opinion; they are not fact. The second paragraph states that "rights and responsibilities of married spouses are not fully recognized by civil unions". This may be the case and I think it would be useful to know exactly what these rights and responsibilities are.

There may be alternative avenues to address these shortcomings or discrepancies without altering the fundamental nature of a long standing human institution. I think a thoughtful discussion of these issues would be beneficial.

The third element in your preamble does not represent good logic. What difference does it make that other states have approved gay marriage? The fact that they passed these laws does not mean they are right, it just means they passed the laws. Why follow them if they are on the wrong side of this important issue? I'm sure there are many other differences between laws in various states. Regulating marriage is the prerogative of the state governments, and there appears no good reason for the states to regulate it in the same way. All states do not have the same age restrictions on marriage. All states do not handle divorce in the same way.

Thank you for your consideration of my thoughts.

Respectfully,

Joseph V. Caputo, Jr.
237 North Governors Avenue

- iii. I read in the Dover Post that the Dover Human Relations Commission will hold a public hearing on its proposed Resolution concerning gay marriage. Since I will be unable to attend that meeting, I am sending you my comments now.

First of all, I think that paragraph #3 (starting "WHEREAS, Massachusetts, Iowa, Vermont Connecticut, and Maine have officially approved gay marriage...") should be deleted. When you were a child, you might have gone to your mother for something you wanted her permission to do because "everyone is doing it." What did she usually reply? That just because other people are doing it, is no reason for you to do it, and chances are, not everyone is doing it. Likewise, just because some states have approved a gay marriage resolution, does not provide a valid reason for us to do it.

Our Judo-Christian origins are based on the sacrament of marriage between a man and a woman. God created man and then created woman to be his complement and helper. Children are best raised by a father and a mother for very practical reasons. President Obama, when campaigning, said he believed marriage should be between a man and a woman.

If you allow "marriage" between people of the same sex, what is to prevent "marriage" among three or four people in 25 or 50years? This opens the floodgates. What is your intent? Is it political? Is it to be like others? If it is to give committed, gay couples certain rights enjoyed by married heterosexual couples, why not change the laws that pertain to those rights? I think that would be the logical thing to do. The definition of marriage should not be fooled with.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Lorrrain O. Gloede
126 Stone Ridge Drive
Dover, De 19901

Dr. Hoff then stated that with respect to the gentlemen who said we were founded as a republic, I hope you agree that tonight's discussion was beneficial and a positive exercise in democracy. He continued that while division remained on the this issue as there was with the DHRC, the Apology for Slavery, he wanted to inform the citizens the vast majority of what the Commission does is consistent with unifying and bringing together the people of the City of Dover. It was the DHRC that had a forum on violence after the murders in our City and been quite active in the issues of the homeless. Those who wished to remain behind would here about those activities later. It was the DHRC that forwarded a Hate Crime Resolution that was unanimously adopted and initiate bus service for the City of Dover and also Fair Housing for years. Dr. Hoff testified before the State Human Relations Commission in years past about restrictive covenant. The DHRC also issued proclamations acknowledging Hispanic Heritage Month, Black History Month, Asian-Pacific Heritage Month, Native Heritage Month, and Women's History Month (issues the DHRC feels strongly about). He wanted everyone to leave this evening knowing that the issues the Commission tackles is always consistent with the mission of the DHRC. He thanked everyone and assured them that their views would be important to the disposition of the resolution and should it pass, he wanted to acknowledge Council Woman Sophie Russell, City Council (the parent organization of the DHRC who the Commission reports to and would be the next step for the resolution in the process). At this point the audience members exited except one.

Dr. Hoff then acknowledged Teresa Davis and her service to the Commission for more than a year. This would be her last night as the Contractual Assistant. She chose to step down for personal reasons.

Commissioner Wasfi then announced that there was little success with the first Study Circles Program. She did contact Mike Casson (Dr. Hoff thought he was out of the country) but she hasn't heard from his as of yet. The Bank of American may be a possible meeting place on Monday nights. She said that "we're trying to beat the clock" and find a viable venue for the meetings and asked her colleagues if they had any suggestions. Commissioner Pyne suggested the meeting room of her church at Calvery. Commissioner Wasfi felt this was a viable option. Commissioner Pyne said she would check into this. Commissioner Wasfi believed if the schedule was amenable to her colleagues, than future meetings might be held at Delaware State College on Mondays form 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. The majority of Commissioners felt they could attend. Commissioner Brumble asked if she had to be available for every meeting. Commissioner Wasfi explained that each successive session built upon the last with topics for discussion based upon your own life experiences. The purpose is to break down stereotypes and foster understanding. Everyone participates in the sessions (it isn't a lecture series) through a facilitator. Commissioner Wasfi noted that the series helps the cement the bond with each other in the Commission and any session missed is important but the first and last session were the most critical. She noted that in the past when she has participated in this series, her relationship with other participants is elevated to a new level. Commissioner Sudler participated several years, stating the scenarios that effect you greatly are played out and the bond that is formed impacts you greatly. Dr. Hoff also suggested the Police Headquarters Community Room as another possible meeting place. Dr. Hoff then suggested another special business related meeting giving to the late hour in two weeks,

consistent with the bylaws giving seven days. He appreciated the extra burden on his colleagues but there was business that needed to be attended to. He also reminded them that there would be on August meeting. Commissioner Gregory agreed with the motion and asked to place a motion on the table, until such time as the DHRC meets, that there be no discussion with the press about the gay marriage resolution until the Commission members have an opportunity to discuss this issue amongst themselves. Dr. Hoff stated that if an issue is on the agenda (gay marriage was on the agenda), it must be communicated to the City Clerk's office who in turn will communicate it to the public. Commissioner Gregory understood his position. Vice Chair Bunkley noted that there was a motion before the Commission, whereupon it was seconded by Commissioner Sudler.

Commissioner Gregory then made the point that within Robert's Rule of Order that the agenda for the next meeting should go to the City Clerk's office but not have anything disseminated to the world until the Commission has had an opportunity to review (an issue she feels very strongly about). Thus her motion is for no web announcements and only those issues go to the City Clerk's office as Robert's Rule of Order (which is an agenda) is done. Vice Chair Bunkley asked if Commissioner Gregory was amending her motion which she agreed and seconded by Commissioner Perry. Chairman Hoff thanked Vice Chair Bunkley for taking over in the context that it might involve the Chair in any debate. Chairman Hoff stated that the information was disseminated to Dover City Council (Parent organization of the DHRC). There was no one else in the e-mail. Chairman Hoff expressed disappointment and dismay that several members of the Commission have voiced opinions that have led to the excision of a service (which has been a rewarding burden for Chairman Hoff) to improve and increase understanding between members of the Commission via the Chair's Web Announcement. The CWA was stopped although Chairman Hoff did receive several e-mails to respond to issues that members had that he thought he did fairly and expeditiously. Those are not web announcement (which are across the board). The CWA includes inspirational quotations, accomplishments and accolades of DHRC members. He feels sad that the CWA is not longer available. He also feels it is a bad precedent to set but he does understand his colleagues opinions about the material published. He made every effort to accommodate their concerns and yet confusion on minutes (relating to when minutes came out) still continued. Up until this time, the policy on minutes was clear to Commission members, being when the first draft of the minutes came out, Commission members would have the opportunity to make corrections one week prior to the next scheduled meeting. These processes were all very clear and were designed to save time. Chairman Hoff made it clear, he has no objections to floating draft minutes only among DHRC members and reiterated at how sad he was the CWA was discontinued and hopes that whomever succeeds him will continue the tradition.

Teresa Davis reread the amendment proposed by Commissioner Gregory who confirmed its content, which no information germane to the Commission should go only to the City Clerk's office. Chairman Hoff asked what she considered germane. Commissioner Gregory gave this evening's resolution as an example. She felt blindsided by the resolution this evening and it came out as the Chair's report. She felt the Commission as group had no discussed this resolution. She felt this issue was brought up as a side comment and then it is disseminated as a resolution and then on to the press without the Commission body discussing this issue. If this was intended as a public hearing, Commissioner Gregory didn't believe it was noticed properly and it didn't know if this was a simple community meeting or not. When she arrived for the monthly DHRC meeting, she was floored and gave in because Chairman Hoff had a list of individuals giving testimony. She admitted to be confused and needed clarification because as a Commission, issues must be discussed prior to a community meeting and anything going to the press must have a disclaimer. She felt strongly the Chairman Hoff

didn't speak on behalf of the Commission unless Commission members give him the authority. Chairman Hoff stated the bylaws did in fact give him that authority. Vice Chair Bunkley then reiterated the motion that all communications remain internal within the body. Confusion over the amendment continued amongst the DHRC members.

Chairman Hoff stated that he was being accused of violating the bylaws of the Commission, and had been accused of circumventing the rules of the Commission via e-mail. He asked Commission members if he had violated the tenants of the Commission, fairness, transparency and legality. No members responded that any of these tenants had been violated. He felt he had the right to respond to these issues. Vice Chair Bunkley agreed after the Commission heard from Commissioner Wasfi. She said the Chair did send out a resolution proposal requesting input from Commission members via e-mail. She suggested that that interim draft should have been discussed as part of the Commission. Her understanding of the motion, that with respect to Commissioner Gregory's motion, that the discussion should be privy to Commission members until such time, that it can be acted upon. Commissioner Gregory deferred to Commissioner Wasfi's interpretation because although she too received said e-mail, she did not understand that it would become a community meeting until DHRC members could discuss it among themselves. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Hoff began by reiterating his position of fairness as it relates to the public. All members who signed up or who wanted to speak tonight were given that opportunity. There was no location limitation for participants and three written views were accepted into the record. He also spoke of transparency to his colleagues. The resolution was initiated three weeks ago. Issues have come to the floor of the Commission before with no prior notice and dealt with them and passed them. As Chair of the Commission for the past four years, Chairman Hoff usually like to give thirty days for consideration of actions, but he didn't feel giving only three weeks rather than four that dramatic. There was a request and people had a week and the issue didn't go to the press in that time period for people to review. Chairman Hoff noted that he included Commissioner Wasfi's changes verbatim and any other changes requested. The resolution was then sent to DHRC members and then to City Council members, then to the Mayor and lastly to the public. The agenda is required to be sent out two weeks ahead of time. He also stated he put the agenda on the CWA to enlighten and protect his colleagues rather than circumvent members with the idea that the issue hadn't been publically discussed before but rather to do so after the DHRC consider legislation and heard comments from the public. He recalled the criticism the City Council leveled at the DHRC for the Slavery Apology for not having enough public discussion. In the case of the gay marriage proposal, there is enough testimony from the public to make an informed vote. Chairman Hoff continued by stating the mission statement of the DHRC is to foster a philosophy of inclusion and fairness and communication in a group setting as well as inquire into alleged incidences of discrimination (which doesn't have to be thru the official intake screening process). Just because there is controversy involved in subject, doesn't mean the Commission doesn't resolve it. The City Code states the Commission develops ways to measure community relations. Chairman Hoff believed that this evenings meeting met that criteria. He noted that in most instances the Commission meetings are rarely attended by the public but he was proud of how the Commission and the public rallied to this issue. He also admitted there is tremendous tension about gay marriage but felt that some of the tension was relieved through this meeting. Chairman Hoff stated the bylaws do give the Chair the authority to preside over meetings, Article 1, Section 1 and the Chair is the only person authorized to make public announcements for the Commission, Article 1, and Section 2. Also, the Bylaws state that there must be proper notice of meeting, seven days ahead of time. Commission members are usually give fourteen days notice and in terms of this evening's

resolution, it came out twenty-one days ahead of time with an open invitation for members to make any changes. The Chair Report is part of the bylaws as an outline of how the Commission meetings are to progress which is under the authority of the Chair. Chairman Hoff reminded members that the report was designed to protect members from the assertion that any resolution had been decided upon without input by the public. The bylaws also state that the Chair may deviate from the order of business, Article 6. The Chair also has the authority over public presentations or to even limit them or expand public discussion. Chairman Hoff then reminded his colleagues of the City Code, Section 5833H:

“The City Solicitor shall provide counsel to the Commission and shall be the legal representative of the Commission in connection with its duties.”

Chairman Hoff encouraged Commission members seek out Counsel about any ruling and he would agree to said ruling if he had in any way violated any of the tenants he spoke of: fairness, transparency or legality. He pointed out that he doesn't believe there can be transparency without communication to Commission members, the City Council, the Mayor and eventually to the public.

Commissioner Sudler asked why the Commission took on the gay marriage resolution if there had been no intake screening on the subject. Vice Chair Bunkley made the point that there was no intake form for recognizing Woman's Suffrage or Black History Month. It was a resolution presented to the body. Commissioner Monroe did comment that he will send out the States Apologies for the members to review to be discussed at the June meeting. Commissioner Lewis, President of the Ancient Order of the Hibernians raised approximately \$140.00 in donations for the Interfaith Task Force at the Texas Road House. The turnout was excellent.

- **Adjournment:** Commissioner Gregory motioned to adjourn, seconded by Commissioner Sudler. Adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

DHRC - Fiscal 2009 Financial Report
1st qtr

	<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	July	Aug	Sept	1st QTR Total	Amount Budgeted	Remaining Balance
30-92	Dover Human Relations Commission	\$ 890.64			\$ 890.64	\$ 3,705.00	\$ 2,814.36

Date Pd.	Itemized Transactions	Amount
30-Jun	State News/Ads	\$ 185.64
25-Jul	Theresa Davis - Minutes Taker	\$ 150.00
25-Jul	Commission Inserts/Utility Bills	\$ 430.00
30-Jul	Theresa Davis - Minutes Taker	\$ 125.00

**DHRC - Fiscal 2009 Financial Report
2nd qtr**

<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	Oct	Nov	Dec	2nd QTR Total	Previous Qtr Balance	Remaining Balance
30-92 Dover Human Relations Commission		\$ 350.00		\$ 350.00	\$ 2,814.36	\$ 2,464.36

Date Pd.	Itemized Transactions	Amount
13-Nov	Theresa Davis/Minutes Taker	\$ 200.00
19-Nov	Theresa Davis/Minutes Taker	\$ 150.00

DHRC - Fiscal 2009 Financial Reports

3rd qtr

<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	Jan	Feb	March	3rd QTR Total	Previous Qtr Balance	Remaining Balance
30-92 Dover Human Relations Commission			\$ 100.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 2,464.36	\$ 2,364.36

Date Pd.	Itemized Transactions	Amount
7-Mar	Theresa Davis/Minutes Taker	\$ 100.00

DHRC - Fiscal 2009 Financial Reports

4th qtr

	<u>EXPENDITURES</u>	April	May	June	4th QTR Total	Previous Qtr Balance	Remaining Balance
30-92	Dover Human Relations Commission	\$ 250.00			\$ 250.00	\$ 2,464.36	\$ 2,214.36

Date Pd.	Itemized Transactions	Amount
4-Apr	Theresa Davis/Minutes Taker	\$ 125.00
4-Apr	Theresa Davis/Minutes Taker	\$ 125.00

FY 09 TOTALS by Quarter

1st Quarter	\$890.64
2nd Quarter	\$350.00
3rd Quarter	\$100.00
4th Quarter	\$250.00
Year End Total	\$1,590.64