

28 Tall Tree Rd.
Sharon, MA 02067

February 12, 2004

Louis L. Kafka
Room 237
State House
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Representative Kafka:

As one of your constituents, I was upset to read that you voted on Wednesday for the Travaglini-Lees amendment which would have prohibited same-sex marriage while allowing for "civil unions."

Writing such discrimination into the State Constitution is wrong. As the majority of the Supreme Court wrote, "The history of our nation has demonstrated that separate is seldom, if ever, equal." And so it follows that the separate status of "civil unions" would be obviously unequal to the marriages currently enjoyed by opposite-sex couples in the Commonwealth.

As you know, some European countries and parts of Canada currently allow marriage between partners of any gender. Despite dire predictions from some corners, in none of these countries has the institution of heterosexual marriage fallen apart.

Massachusetts has the opportunity to become the first state in the nation to similarly end the legacy of discrimination against gay, lesbian, and bisexual people by permitting them to marry the partners of their choosing. Best of all, perhaps, to take this important step forward, the Legislature need simply take no action. Unfortunately, some would have the Legislature go out of its way to discriminate, and to leave in our constitution a lasting legacy of discrimination.

I hope that, should you have the opportunity to vote on this issue in the future, you will not attempt to create any further "separate but equal" classifications.

Sincerely,

Michael Castleman