

THE PRESIDENT HAS SEEN
4/9/96

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

96 APR 8 P7:01

April 8, 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: JACK QUINN *JQ*
COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: GAY MARRIAGE

The White House has received numerous inquiries concerning your position on gay marriage. In addition, The Advocate, a widely-read gay and lesbian newspaper, is planning to publish a story on this issue and would like to include a statement of your position. The deadline for that story is *tomorrow -- Tuesday, April 9.*

With input from Marsha Scott, we have prepared the attached talking points. George Stephanopoulos has reviewed and approved them.

- The institutions of traditional marriage and family face tremendous pressures in today's society. We must do everything we can to support and strengthen these institutions. The President has previously said that he does not personally support same-sex marriages.
- The President is aware that many communities and institutions are considering whether certain basic benefits can be provided outside the context of traditional marriage. The challenge in addressing these issues is to remain sensitive to the traditional values of our communities while preserving the fundamental right to live free from unjustified discrimination.
- In our country's history we have, for good reason, looked first to state and local governments, as well as the private sector, to consider issues like these involving community values and matters of conscience. The President believes that these issues continue to be best resolved at this level of civil discourse.

Recommendation

That you approve the talking points set forth above.

AGREE

DISAGREE

DISCUSS

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 28, 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

FROM: KATHLEEN WALLMAN
DEPUTY COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: GAY MARRIAGE

In the event that you are asked about gay marriage at tomorrow morning's coffee, Jack Quinn recommends that you respond along the following lines. These talking points were prepared with input from Marsha Scott.

- The institutions of traditional marriage and family face tremendous pressures in today's society. We must do everything we can to support and strengthen these institutions. I have previously said that I do not personally support same-sex marriages.
- I am aware that many communities and institutions are considering ways, outside the context of traditional marriage, to address issues relating to same-sex partnerships, including whether certain basic benefits can be provided to same-sex partners. The challenge in addressing these issues is to remain sensitive to the traditional values of our communities while preserving the fundamental right to live free from unjustified discrimination.
- In our country's history we have, for good reason, looked first to state and local governments, as well as the private sector, to consider issues like these involving community values and matters of conscience. I believe that issues relating to same-sex partnerships continue to be best resolved at this level of civil discourse.

Recommendation

That you approve the talking points as forth above.

AGREE

DISAGREE

DISMISS

TALKING POINTS ON GAY MARRIAGE

- TYPES OF STATUTES THAT MIGHT BE PROPOSED
- The institutions of traditional marriage and family face tremendous pressures in today's society. We must do everything we can to support and strengthen these institutions. The President has previously said that he does not personally support same-sex marriages.
 - The President is aware that many communities and institutions are considering whether certain basic benefits can be provided outside the context of traditional marriage. The challenge in addressing these issues is to remain sensitive to the traditional values of our communities while preserving the fundamental right to live free from unjustified discrimination.
 - In our country's history we have, for good reason, looked first to state and local governments, as well as the private sector, to consider issues like these involving community values and matters of conscience. The President believes that these issues continue to be best resolved at this level of civil discourse.

Proclamatory statute

It shall be federal policy that a state may decline to recognize, support or fund any

The institutions of traditional marriage and family face tremendous pressures in today's society. We must do everything we can to support and strengthen these institutions. I have previously said that I do not personally support same-sex marriages.

I am aware that many communities and institutions are considering ways, outside the context of traditional marriage, to address issues relating to same-sex partnerships, including whether certain basic benefits can be provided to same sex-partners. The challenge in addressing these issues is to remain sensitive to the traditional values of our communities while preserving the fundamental right to live free from unjustified discrimination.

In our country's history we have, for good reason, looked first to state and local governments, as well as the private sector, to consider issues like these involving community values and matters of conscience. I believe that issues relating to same-sex partnerships continue to be best resolved at this level of civil discourse.

other

The institutions of traditional marriage and family face tremendous pressures in today's society. We must do everything we can to support and strengthen these institutions. I have previously said that I do not personally support same-sex marriages.

I am aware that

~~Outside the context of traditional marriage, many communities and institutions are considering the best way to address issues relating to same-sex partnerships, while no including consensus has yet been reached, I note that a number of states and localities, as well as some of this nation's leading corporations -- including Microsoft, IBM, Disney and Levi-Strauss -- are making efforts to resolve the difficult question of what basic benefits can be provided to same-sex partners. The challenge in developing innovative new solutions is to remain sensitive to the traditional values of our communities while preserving the fundamental right to live free from unjustified discrimination.~~

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addressing these issues

In our country's history we have, for good reason, looked to state and local governments, as well as the private sector, to consider options for addressing difficult issues involving community values and matters of conscience. I believe that issues relating to same-sex partnerships are best resolved at this level.

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continue to be

of civil discourse.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 28, 1996

MEMORANDUM FOR GEORGE STEPHANOPOULOS
MARSHA SCOTT

FROM: KATHY WALLMAN

Kathy Wallman has advised me that the attached represents Jack Quinn's proposal on what the President should say about the issue of gay marriage.

Kathy has asked me to forward this statement to you for your review. She has also asked me to request that we meet as promptly as possible to discuss this.

FAX to Steve N.

I do not support same sex marriage. ~~I do, however, recognize that there are same sex partnerships.~~ Traditional marriage and family face tremendous pressures in today's society. ~~Presently I do not support adding this pressure to these institutions.~~ However, with regard to same sex partnerships, I respect the need for individuals who are in a committed relationship to share basic benefits, including health care and survivorship.

I am aware that many communities, corporations and institutions are considering other ways to address the issue of partnerships. The challenge in addressing these issues is how to remain sensitive to the traditional values of our communities while preserving the fundamental right to live free from unjustified discrimination.

In our country's history we have, for good reason, looked first to state and local governments, as well as the private sector, to consider issues like these involving community values and matters of conscience. Governor Romer's recent veto of a clearly discriminatory and punitive law concerning same sex couples, is a good example of a state protecting fundamental American rights while maintaining the opportunity for continued discussion. I believe that issues relating to same sex partnerships continue to be best resolved at this level of civil discourse.

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JR

traditional

I remain of that view.

The institutions of marriage and family face tremendous pressures in today's society. We must do everything we can to support and strengthen these institutions. I have previously said that I do not personally support same-sex marriages, ~~in part because I believe that they threaten the place of traditional marriage in our~~

~~While no state has yet recognized same sex marriages, many states and localities, as well as hundreds of private corporations, are attempting to address same sex partnerships. A number of state and local governments have granted gay and lesbian employees and their partners certain basic benefits, such as health insurance coverage and bereavement leave. Major corporations, including IBM, Microsoft and Levi Strauss, have adopted similar initiatives.~~

a variety of issues related to this one.

I note that

NOT

~~In our country's history, we have, for good reason, looked to It is a great American tradition to permit local governments and the private sector, to consider options for addressing difficult issues involving community values and matters of conscience. I believe these kinds of local experiments should be allowed to continue without federal interference.~~

state and

, and in some circumstances

I believe that all of these issues are best left to resolution at those levels of civil society, without interference from the federal government. As these institutions consider the wide range of issues implicated, I trust they will be keenly sensitive to respect for the traditional values of our communities, including the right to live free from unjustifiable discrimination

Same sex marriage

Repub candidates have all signed on to this.

~~President in '92~~

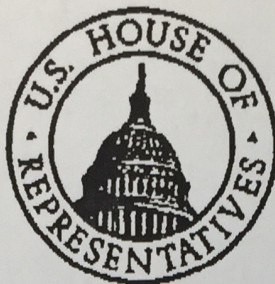
President in '92 campaigned said not support same sex marriage.

But he is comfortable addressing legal issues. Equal access under law, etc.

Conservatives and gay community view this as issue of legitimacy.

Companies

This is an area states and corporations are considering. That process should go forward.



FAX from the office of
 CONGRESSMAN GERRY E. STUDDS
 237 Cannon Building
 Washington, D.C.

Date: 3-26-96

To: Steve Neuwirth

From: Mark Agnew

Number of pages which follow: 1

Comments: some thoughts for your
 consideration.

For further information: Phone (202)225-3111 Fax (202)225-2212

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Let me say, first, that the institution of marriage and what most of us think of as the "traditional family" have come under tremendous pressures in today's society. We must do everything we can to support and strengthen them.

At the same time, we must acknowledge that some men and women are able to find fulfillment only in relationships that do not conform to our traditional notions of marriage and family. These individuals are entitled to our consideration as well, and it is in society's interest to encourage them to live in stable, faithful, responsible, relationships -- even if those relationships differ from what most of us have been brought up to regard as the norm.

Whether that encouragement should take the form of legally sanctioned marriages is something about which people of good will can differ. Our society is not there yet. I personally am not there yet. But I also believe that such matters of conscience should be decided not in Washington, but in the states and local communities, as they have been since the founding of the Republic.

As of now, no state has recognized same-sex marriage, though some are wrestling with the issue and many more will do so in the coming months and years. By the same token, many local governments and hundreds of leading corporations, such as [Microsoft and Levi Strauss], have taken the more modest step of granting gay and lesbian employees and their partners certain basic benefits that married couples take for granted, such as health insurance coverage and bereavement leave.

I think these kinds of local experiments should be allowed to continue without federal interference. On the other hand, I think most Americans believe that the federal government does have an important role to play in ensuring that every person, regardless of sexual orientation, is safe from violence, harassment, and discrimination. That is why I support reauthorization of the Hate Crimes Statistics Act, and urge the speedy enactment of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act now pending in Congress.