

Testimony in favor of HB 259
Civil Unions
Linda Gryczan

I have shared hearth and home with another woman for more than 21 years and legally, we are strangers. The law says I don't have a family. While the two of us take on all the responsibilities of family, we have absolutely none of the rights. While we take care of elders and children on both sides of our families, nothing in Montana law acknowledges our union.

The law does not serve my family or the people of Montana.

The people of Montana are not served when I need extra paperwork to be at her hospital bedside.

The people of Montana are not served our inability to access public services.

Montana is not served because we pay lower taxes.

The people of Montana are served if the state recognizes the lives of the people who live here.

Every legislative session, I hear that my life and love is against someone's religion. I hear people claim to be "pro family" say that I should cast off my family like an old pair of jeans.

With a government that claims a separation of church and state, this is not about religion.

Recognizing civil unions does serves the people of Montana.

I urge your support for HB 259.