EXHIBIT 2
DATE 1/17/05
HB 259

To Members of the House Judiciary Committee
Concerning HB 259 authorizing civil unions for gay couples

Jan 17, 2005

As a resident of Montana for the past 47 years, the wife of a Montana State University retired professor, the mother of 4 grown children, and grandmother of 5, I strongly oppose HB 259, as do 67% of my fellow Montanans according to a Lee Newspaper poll.

For thousands of years throughout recorded history, marriage has been defined and protected as a union between one man and one woman. Most societies have recognized that marriage not only civilizes and propagates the human race, but thousands of years of experience show that the best environment in which to raise and teach children is where both a mother and father are present.

HB 259 would create civil unions for homosexuals, giving them essentially all the rights of marriage without actually calling it marriage. Who could then prevent them from adopting children? Ken Connor, president Family Research Council points out: "Children in homosexual households grow up without experiencing first-hand three of the most important relationships required for social development: husband/wife, mother/father and male/female." An April 2001 report in American Sociological Review reports that children of gay couples are more likely to be confused about their own sexual identity, more likely to engage in homosexual relationships, and more likely to be promiscuous. These children generally scored lower in verbal skills, and basic math skills, were less likely to become involved in sports and group activities, and also were regarded by their teachers as introverts and loners.

Dr. James Dobson points out that more than ten thousand studies have concluded that kids do best when they are raised by both a committed mother and father. "The most loving mother in the world cannot teach a little boy how to be a man," he says. Lesbian mothers can not teach daughters how to love a man or what to look for in a husband. Similarly, gay men would have trouble teaching daughters how to be woman and sons how to relate to women and how to love and care for a woman.

Some people argue that gay people should have the same right to marry as anyone else. All people have that right under the guidelines and limitations set by society for thousands of years.. (Close relatives cannot marry, underage children cannot marry. No one can marry more than one partner at a time etc.) Anthropologists tell us that until now no society or culture has made homosexual marriage normative. Recently, however, in countries where homosexual civil unions have been legalized traditional marriages suffer. After a decade or more of something close to full gay marriage, a majority of children in Sweden and Norway are born out of wedlock and 60% of first-born children in Denmark have unmarried parents. "Marriage is slowly dying in Scandinavia," writes The Weekly Standard journalist Stanley Kurtz.

Homosexual marriages tend to devalue the sacredness of marriage in general. They also destabilize society. In his book MARRIAGE UNDER FIRE, Dr. James Dobson quotes a British medical journal which reports that male homosexual relationships last, on average, eighteen months, and that gay men have an average of eight partners a year outside of their committed

relationships. By contrast (even in our divorce prone society) 67% of first marriages in the United States last ten or more years, (and many still last a lifetime.) Also, more than 75 percent of heterosexual married couples report being faithful to their spouses.

If homosexual marriages or civil unions are legalized schools may be required to depict such unions as the moral equivalent of traditional marriages. In Canada, where homosexual activism is rapidly eroding religious freedom, anything considered "homophobic" is punishable by six months in prison or other severe penalties, reports journalist Lynn Vincent writing in World Magazine (8 May, 2004.) The owner of a printing press in Canada was fined over $40,000 for refusing to print stationery for a homosexual activist organization. Pastors and Priests in Canada are fearful of preaching certain teachings in the Bible found in Romans 1 and in the Book of Leviticus. When 63 year old Pastor Ake Green preached in Sweden these Biblical teachings, he received death threats and was arrested for "hate speech" (though he never said anything unkind about gay people themselves). He was sentenced to one month in jail. It is considered likely that Christian colleges and universities and nonprofit organizations that refuse to hire homosexuals on religious grounds will lose their tax exemptions. "Radical homosexual activists...will use their financial and political clout to silence people of faith and the Gospel," says Alan Sears. President and CEO of the Alliance Defense Fund.

These are only a few of the possible ramifications that can take place in our country if we start down the slippery slope of giving gay relationships legal recognition as civil unions. We must not redefine and demote traditional marriage and the family, our time tested and honored basic unit of society, against the will of the majority of Americans in order to please what is estimated to be 2 percent of our population.

Respectfully submitted by:

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