Patti Kanduch Montana State Director for Concerned Women for America

good morning Madam ~~Chairwoman~~ Chair chair Rice & Committee members

EXHIBIT [redacted] 20
DATE 3/16/05
SB 199

If Senate Bill 199 passes, it will create a new class of citizens who are specially protected based on their peculiar, and often medically dangerous, sex acts. As this bill attempts to protect sexual orientation it fails to clearly define what it is. How can you expect something to be protected if the citizens of Montana respect and follow a law they ~~do not~~ even understand? If two roommates want to claim they are homosexuals, what prevents them? How do you know if someone is bisexual, homosexual or heterosexual? Do we really want employers asking about who someone sleeps with in the interview process?

The bill calls for having a history of being identified as this preference. How long does it take to establish a history? Do you have to bring an affidavit from sex partners?

What also has been conveniently overlooked, in the rush to bestow government protection to perverse sexual and gender behavior, is the right of American citizens and places of worship to practice their religious beliefs without the interference of government.

How are employers, property owners, education, government and financial institutions to prevent discrimination if they do not inquire about sexual history and preferences?

The fall out of Senate Bill 199 cannot be understated! This bill, if signed into law, will sacrifice the right of every Montana citizen to practice their faith as they see fit (as guaranteed by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and by Article11, Section 5 of the Montana Bill of Rights).

Businessmen and community leaders, not to mention churches, will now have to disregard their faith and religious teaching to embrace an irreligious and amoral mandate by government.

The intention of this "gay rights" bill is to force public acceptance of sexual behavior irrespective of State and Federal constitutional safeguards of religious freedom. This means religious based organizations that refuse to hire homosexuals can be charged with discrimination because of this proposed new law covering "sexual orientation".

Requiring any individual or organization to violate their own moral teachings and values system, even in the name of anti-discrimination and tolerance, is itself an act of discrimination and secular intolerance.

Please vote no on Senate Bill 199