



Testimony in Support of Raised Bill Number 7395: AN ACT CONCERNING
MARRIAGE EQUALITY

March 26, 2007

I am Linda Estabrook, and I am presenting my testimony to you today in my role as Executive Director of the Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective.

The World Health Organization defines health as follows: "Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity...". This is a broad definition of health encompassing the breadth of our lives beyond our physical bodies and speaks to the impact that social circumstances can have on our overall well-being in our communities and as productive, contributing members of our community.

Equality and recognition of same gender relationships and partnerships is key to the health and well-being of gay and lesbian individuals, the LGBT community, and to the general community. Treating us as second class citizens takes a toll on the entire community, not just LGBT people. The time and energy we have to expend on a daily basis to assure the safety and security of our families takes away from the time we could be contributing to society.

We are not asking for anything more than anyone else when it comes to marriage. More importantly, we are not asking for anything less. We are not less than you who are opposed to same gender marriage. We are equal to you. Passing this legislation assures we get treated that way and that we have the same rights and privileges as those who currently benefit from marriage.

Passing this legislation is good for the health and well-being of the entire community. It supports our efforts to fulfill our obligations to our partners and children for whom we only want the best. It supports our family values which are the same as the family values supported by the current system of marriage in Connecticut and in the country.

Thank you.

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