Subject: \*M\*: HAWAII MARCH 3
Date: Mon, 3 Mar 97 18:28:07 HST

From: ramsey@math.hawaii.edu (Tom Ramsey)

To: ramsey-list@math.hawaii.edu

## CONFERENCE COMMITTEE ADJOURNS AFTER SHARING VIEWS

The Conference Committee of the Hawaii House and Senate met this morning on HB 117 and HB 118, for about an hour. Each of the House and Senate described some of the differences between their respective versions. They then adjourned, subject to being called together at any time without the further need for 48 hours notice.

HB 117 would give the Legislature the power to restrict marriage to heterosexual couples. HB 118 would grant "reciprocal beneficiaries", defined to be couples who can't otherwise marry (including mother and son, father and daughter, two sisters, etc., in the House version), a list of limited rights (e.g., hospital visitation). The House and Senate differ on the list of rights. On HB 117, they differ on the wording and the placement of the amendment (where in the Constitution would it go).

The Legislature adjourns near the end of April/early May. However, constitutional actions require special notice to the governor (who otherwise does not play a role) which pushes back the deadline for passing something this session of the Legislature.

Rep. Terry Tom seemed to speaking to the media and not to the senators; it's a safe bet that he managed to insult all of them. This morning, the House did not offer the Senate dialogue on the issue.

The senators offered detailed responses and reasoning for specific clauses under discussion. The House side didn't seem interested in hearing facts of either law or economics. Especially, when former insurance commissioner Senator Wayne Metcalf offered data that health benefits for "reciprocal beneficiaries" have lower costs than pregnancies among heterosexual couples (and are therefore cheaper to provide), Terrance Tom simply repeated his assertion that the benefits proposed by the Senate would increase cost. [My mind is made up, don't confuse me with the facts.]

Tom Ramsey President, Friends of h.e.r.m.p Ex-officio, Steering Committee of the Hawaii Marriage-Project

P.S. Marriage Project-Hawaii (formerly h.e.r.m.p) is the ONLY organization that pays the fees of Hawaii lawyer Dan Foley in the case Baehr v. Miike. Donations to Marriage Project-Hawaii are fully tax-deductible, and much needed. Please send them to Marriage Project-Hawaii, PO Box 11690, Honolulu, HI 96828.

Marriage Project-Hawaii has a brand new T-shirt design. For further information, please consult skippero@aol.com.

# THE NINETEENTH LEGISLATURE REGULAR SESSION OF 1997

#### **NOTICE OF CONFERENCE COMMITTEE MEETING**

DATE:

Monday, March 3, 1997

TIME:

9:00 a.m.

PLACE:

Conference Room 329, State Capitol

#### AGENDA

The Conference Committee will meet to resolve differences between the last House and Senate versions of the following:

HB 117 SD1

PROPOSING A CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT RELATING

TO MARRIAGE.

Conferees:

Representatives Tom, Chair; Cachola, Herkes, Yamane, and Whalen

Senators Chumbley, Matsunaga, Co-Chairs; McCartney and Metcalf

HB 118 HD1 SD1

RELATING TO UNMARRIED COUPLES.

Conferees:

Representatives Tom, Chair; Cachola, Herkes, Yamane, and Thielen

Senators Chumbley, Matsunaga, Co-Chairs, McCartney, and Metcalf

AS THIS IS A DECISION MAKING MEETING ONLY, NO PUBLIC TESTIMONY WILL BE ACCEPTED.

If you require special assistance or auxiliary aids and/or services to attend this meeting (i.e. sign language interpreter, wheelchair accessibility, or parking designated for the disabled), please contact the committee clerk 24 hours prior to the meeting so arrangements can be made.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL THE COMMITTEE CLERK AT 586-6490.

Sen. Avery Chrimbley, Co-Chair

Rep. Terrance W.H. Tom, Chair

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