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COOK COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
WILLIAM R. MORAN
6TH DISTRICT

March 24, 1999

Thomas F. Coleman
Executive Director
AASP- Equal Rights Campaign
P.O. Box 65756
Los Angeles, CA 90065

Re: Gender-neutral domestic partner benefits

Dear Mr. Coleman:

I would like to thank you and the AASP Equal Rights Campaign for responding so quickly and effectively to my request for assistance.

As you know, a "same-sex-only" domestic partner benefits proposal was placed on the agenda of the Human Rights Committee of the Cook County Board of Commissioners. I opposed the measure because I have insisted that such a benefits plan should be gender neutral and open to all employees with domestic partners regardless of whether they are same-sex or opposite-sex.

When my staff called you for information, you provided us with a wealth of information to show that the cost of a gender-neutral plan would be minimal.

I was pleasantly surprised that you took the time to fly to Chicago to personally testify before the committee. Your testimony was powerful and most enlightening. The other members of the committee obviously were impressed by your expertise on this issue, since their questions kept you at the witness microphone for nearly a half hour.

Although a majority of the committee voted in favor of the same-sex only plan, several commissioners stressed that this was only a first step toward reform. These commissioners stated that they wanted to study the feasibility of eventually adopting a gender-neutral plan or even a superinclusive plan such as that implemented by Bank of America which also includes benefits for some dependent blood relatives.

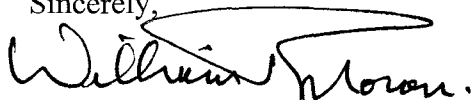
I hope that AASP Equal Rights Campaign will hold these commissioners to their statements that



this was only a first step. With follow-up communications from AASP, some commissioners might be willing to cosponsor a resolution calling for a formal study into the feasibility of expanding the new benefits plan (assuming it is passed by the full board next month) into a gender-neutral or even broader plan so that all workers, whether married or unmarried, are treated equally when it comes to health and other benefits.

Again, thank you for your assistance. I look forward to working with you so that eventually my vision of a gender-neutral benefits plan for county employees will become a reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William R. Moran". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

William R. Moran

Cook County Commissioner

6th District