

MARK B. COHEN, MEMBER



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

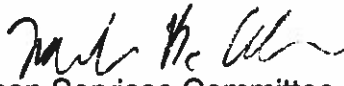
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MEMORANDUM

TO: All House Members

FROM: Mark B. Cohen 
Democratic Human Services Committee Chairman

DATE: January 5, 2011

RE: Co-sponsorship of Legislation Creating Civil Unions

Your co-sponsorship is requested of legislation that would create civil unions.

This bill would define a civil union as a union between two members of the same sex and would have all the same state laws applicable to that union as does marriage.

It is increasingly clear that the votes do not exist in the foreseeable future to either constitutionally ban gay marriage in Pennsylvania, or to permit gay marriage in Pennsylvania. Civil unions represent the middle of the road compromise position between constitutionally banning and permitting gay marriages.

Nothing in this bill would require any religion or any clergyman to perform any ceremony uniting people in a civil union. This legislation will merely offer committed gay couples the same legal rights that are bestowed upon married people, without giving them the status of marriage.

This bill will be the same as HB 2447, PN 3611 from the previous session. The bill then was cosponsored by GERBER, BUXTON, BRIGGS, BROWN, CALTAGIRONE, CURRY, DePASQUALE, D. EVANS, FABRIZIO, FRANKEL, JOHNSON, JOSEPHS, LENTZ, MANDERINO, McGEEHAN, McILVAINE SMITH, MYERS, M. O'BRIEN, PARKER, PASHINSKI, PAYTON, PRESTON, ROEBUCK, SANTARSIERO, STURLA, R. TAYLOR, VITALI, WAGNER, WHEATLEY, WILLIAMS AND YOUNGBLOOD

Please contact Linda Huntington in my office to co-sponsor this bill at either lhunting@pahouse.net or 787-3085. This bill will be introduced on February 7th.