

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS SENATE
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1053

SENATOR STEVEN A. TOLMAN

MIDDLESEX AND SUFFOLK
DISTRICT

ROOM 213A

TEL. (617) 722-1280

FAX (617) 722-1069

July 12, 2001

D. Margaret Drury
795 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

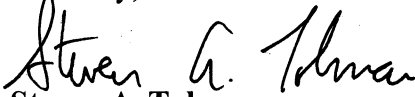
Dear D. Margaret,

Thank you very much for contacting me with your support of *S.1344, An act providing equal employment benefits for public sector employees*, which I have co-sponsored. This bill would offer the same benefits extended to married spouses of public employees to domestic partners. For your perusal, I have enclosed a copy of the written testimony I submitted at the public hearing on June 26, 2001.

S.1344 remains under review by the Joint Committee on Public Service until the committee offers a recommendation. I encourage you to contact your State Representative and the committee chairs, Senator Brian A. Joyce in Statehouse Room 413-A and Representative Brian S. Dempsey in Statehouse Room 34 to express your support for this bill. If you are unsure who your State Representative is, please call my office at (617) 722-1280 and my staff will assist you.

I hope that this information is helpful. Again, thank you very much for contacting me about this important issue. If you have further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,


Steven A. Tolman

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

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COMMITTEES:
LOCAL AFFAIRS (CHAIR)
BANKS AND BANKING
FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE
STATE ADMINISTRATION
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



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June 26, 2001

Senator Brian A. Joyce, Chair
Representative Brian S. Dempsey, Chair
Joint Committee on Public Service
State House Room 473-B
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Messrs. Chairmen:

I write you in support of Senate bill *S.1344, An act providing equal employment benefits for public sector employees.*

This bill would offer the same benefits extended to married spouses of public employees to domestic partners and their dependents. Given the changing makeup of families, this legislation is necessary to assure that all families, regardless of marital status or sexual orientation, receive the same security enjoyed by "traditional" families.

Under current law, a public employee may include only their spouse and legal dependents on their health insurance. This distinction hinges eligibility on marital status. Since state law prohibits gay and lesbian marriages, domestic partners are not eligible, thereby punishing a group of people based on a personal choice of no consequence to their work performance. The state does not discriminate in regards to health insurance on the grounds of race, ethnicity or religion, and should not deny equal pay and benefits for equal work based on sexuality either.

Domestic partner benefits are currently offered by a broad array of governments, academic institutions and corporate entities. Seven states and over one-hundred major municipalities offer benefits to domestic partners, including New York, California, Connecticut, Baltimore, Chicago Los Angeles and Philadelphia. Over one-hundred and twenty five colleges and universities including every Ivy League College and Massachusetts schools such as Amherst College, Brandeis University, Emerson College, MIT, Tufts University and many others offer domestic partner benefits as well. In the world of business a multitude of corporations offer domestic partner benefits. These include prominent law firms, Fleet Financial, John Hancock Financial Service and Beth Israel Medical Center. If Massachusetts wishes to attract bright men and women to public service, it must remain competitive with the marketplace and offer the necessary benefits to its hardworking citizens. Simply, health insurance should be a basic right for all employees of the Commonwealth and their families.



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Communication #11

A communication was received from Senator Steven Tolman, regarding Senate bill 1344, "An Act providing equal employment benefits for public sector employees."

In City Council July 30, 2001

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