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Miles-Gaw Correspondence Transcription

*[Letter, Audrey and Tom Miles to Steve Gaw, Missouri state senator, April 2000. Tom Miles Papers, Series II, box 5, folder 3.]*

April 2000  
The Honorable Steve Gaw  
Speaker of the House  
House Post Office  
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Dear Mr. Speaker,

In the past few months, legislators have filed bills in both the house and senate which seek to prohibit the recognition of same-sex marriage in Missouri.

These bills are divisive, unnecessary, and discriminatory. The sponsors of these bills are looking for a wedge issue, [sic] Once again, lesbian and gay Missourians are being used as a scapegoat to create controversy in an election year.

Missouri law has long been interpreted to limit marriage to between a man and a woman. That, combined with the Defense of Marriage Act, passed by Congress in 1996, clearly give Missouri all the authority it needs to reject marriages between people of the same sex. The bills introduced this year are not necessary.

I would also like to mention that during testimony on these bills in the House Committee on Children, Youth, and Families, it was pointed out that there are over 300 benefits that are automatically conferred upon heterosexual married couples in our state. To deny these benefits to committed same-sex couples is discrimination.

These are just a few of the many reasons that these bills should not be passed into law. I urge you to hold any such bill in your office and not assign it to the house calendar. Please do not allow religious political extremists to use the human rights of a group of people as election year fodder.

Sincerely,

Audrey + Tom Miles [signed]