



Summary of OutFront Minnesota's 2009 Legislative Agenda

Relationship-recognition:

Marriage (Senate File 120, House File 893 and Senate File 1210) – OutFront Minnesota supports legislation to provide legal protections for same-sex couples through marriage. OutFront Minnesota is working on a three to five years strategy to build support and achieve the legal recognition of marriage through the legislative process.

Legal recognition of marriages performed outside of Minnesota – Minnesota's Defense of Marriage Act, passed in 1997, not only outlawed same-sex marriage but also prohibited the state from recognizing same-sex marriages performed in other states. OutFront Minnesota supports legislation to recognize marriages performed outside of Minnesota.

Health Care:

Health Care Benefits for the Domestic Partners of State Employees (Senate File 1153/House File 1219) – OutFront Minnesota worked to secure health care benefits to the domestic partners of state employees for years. Under the Ventura Administration, state employees were given sick and bereavement leave and health care benefits to allow them to provide for their domestic partners. In 2003, the benefits were removed from the state contracts by the Legislature, and state employees who could not marry their partner were denied health care benefits for their families. This bill would provide health care benefits to the same-sex or opposite-sex domestic partners of state employees.

Health Care Declaration Federal Law Conformity Act – Minnesota's current health care directive model provides inadequate protections for unmarried couples with regard to the disclosure of medical information. This legislation would strengthen protections for same-sex couples while ensuring privacy for individual patients.

OutFront Minnesota
Leading Minnesota Toward Equality
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Health Care Securities Act – This bill provides comprehensive, affordable health care for everyone in Minnesota, starting with our state’s children. Nearly 77,000 children are living without health insurance. Because same-sex couples and gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) parents often lack the legal protections necessary to access health care, a bill providing health care benefits for children would help provide a healthy future for all of our state’s youth. In coalition with TakeAction Minnesota and other organizations in the Make Health Happen coalition, OutFront Minnesota supports the passage of this legislation.

Education:

Safe Schools for All legislation (Senate File 971/House File 1198) – Minnesota law currently requires school districts to have harassment/violence policies related to conduct based on sex, religion, or race. This provision would require school districts to have model policies that prohibit harassment, violence and bullying based on actual or perceived race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex marital status, disability, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, physical characteristics, and association with a person or group with one or more of these actual or perceived characteristics. Additionally, the Department of Education would be responsible for collecting, reviewing, maintaining and allowing public access to the policies. OutFront Minnesota is working with Rainbow Families in creating the Safe Schools for All coalition in support of the this legislation.

Comprehensive sexuality education standards (Senate File 965, House File 906) Through the Coalition for Responsible Sex Ed, OutFront Minnesota is working on a variety of approaches to foster an environment in Minnesota where responsible sex ed programs are available to students in Minnesota’s public schools. A statewide standard would insure that GLBT, questioning and all other youth would have the information they need to lead healthy lives.

Youth:

Runaway and Homeless Youth Act – As part of the Youth Moving Forward Coalition, OutFront Minnesota supports the appropriation of eight million dollars to provide critical support and services for homeless youth. OutFront Minnesota additionally supports the efforts of the coalition to ensure that Ready to Launch support and medical assistance is available to young adults up to 21 years old. Additionally, the work to standardize the process to allow youth to establish independence and receive financial aid for higher education will help GLBT and all young adults who lack support from their families obtain degrees.

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