

Call Patton and ask him to stand with Bapt. Homes in ACLU lawsuit

Letter

Open letter to citizens of Kentucky

Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children is preparing to defend itself against a lawsuit by the American Civil Liberties Union challenging our policy that prohibits people who engage in homosexual behavior from employment with KBHC. Our agency has been informed that unless we rescind our policy, or refuse state reimbursements to care for young victims of abuse and neglect, we will find ourselves in court.

The commonwealth of Kentucky is a potential co-defendant in this lawsuit, should the Cabinet for Families and Children and Department for Juvenile Justice continue contracting with Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children. Those contracts provide partial reimbursement to KBHC for the care of children and teenagers removed from their homes by the commonwealth because of physical or sexual abuse, neglect or behavioral problems. To avoid the lawsuit, the commonwealth could decide to break its contracts with KBHC and I am writing today hoping the citizens of Kentucky will truly think about the implications of that decision.

By severing contracts with Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children, the commonwealth will be giving tacit approval to the homosexual lifestyle. To those who

have worked tirelessly to pass legislation on a local and state level that grants special rights to gays and lesbians, this would be a victory. But this is not a political issue. In this context, it is not even a religious issue – it is a child advocacy issue.

When non-biased social and medical scientists have looked at the issue of homosexuality, the conclusion is clear: homosexual behavior is a potentially harmful and fatal sexual lifestyle. Why would we want to promote such a lifestyle, especially to sexually abused and confused children and youth? Many will assume that kind of research comes from conservative Christian doctors, psychologists and social workers. Not so. The vast majority of sources come from academicians and social scientists who have no known religious agenda to promote through their research.

For Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children the issue is children. We want our staff to model behaviors that will build children up. Homosexual behavior is not our only concern. We have made it clear to our employees that heterosexual relationships outside marriage, drug abuse and other unhealthy behaviors are unacceptable. Studies, and common sense, tell us that these lifestyles put our teens at risk of disease, depression, instability and isolation. We believe to encourage a child toward a sexual behavior that could reduce his life span by 25 to 30 years is criminal.

There is an important distinction between those we hire and those we serve. Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children has never, and will never, discriminate

against a child or teen-ager in our care for any reason – and that includes sexual identity issues. Every child is an individual and we treat him or her where she is. We will never segregate or berate a child with such issues. KBHC has never had a complaint regarding our care for children or teens with sexual identity issues. We care for them compassionately. However, we will also never encourage a child to engage in homosexual behavior by employing role models who openly engage in homosexuality. Too much is at risk. For us to encourage that behavior is not in the best interests of our children. I also believe that should the commonwealth of Kentucky discontinue contracting with Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children because of this issue, then our state government will be telling our most vulnerable citizens that homosexual behavior can lead to a productive, healthy life when the facts clearly state the opposite. We realize our position on this issue is not politically correct, but we believe the health of those we serve takes precedence over popular, politically-biased ideology.

I encourage you to contact Gov. Paul Patton at (502) 564-2611 by phone or 564-2517 by fax and ask him to stand with KBHC for what is right for Kentucky's children. Call your legislators and encourage them to do the same. If you do not know how to contact your legislator after the General Assembly adjourns, call (502) 564-8100.

Bill Smithwick
President and CEO
Kentucky Baptist Homes
for Children