

INTEGRITY/Houston

3512 Travis

528-0423

P. O. Box 16041
Houston, Texas 77022

May 7, 1973

Dear Legislator:

The enclosed questionnaire is intended to explore your attitude toward the right of privacy and freedom of conscience for adults. We write in the belief that human law is meant to protect life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness--that it is not the property or the benefactor of the rich, the few or an instrument for the religious or moral convictions of one segment of society as against those of another. We hold that, while actions involving injury to person or property must be regulated for the protection of all, morality is a private matter and not the legitimate province of the State.

Nine States: Illinois, Colorado, Oregon, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, District of Columbia, Delaware and Ohio have officially recognized this principle and have abandoned the illegitimate, pointless and profitless regulation of private sexual behavior among consenting adults, and as a result, their crime rate is lower, not higher. Such laws against victimless acts are, at best, unenforceable and, at worst, subject to the most arbitrary application. They undermine respect for the law in general because they make felons or miscreants of people whose only offense is their participation of alternative in their enjoyment of conjugal relations or a harmless difference in their choice of partners.

The overwhelming majority of citizens affected by these laws are in all respects responsible and productive members of their community. Those who pursue a different lifestyle often do so more because of the persecutory laws and social prejudices than because they are inherently promiscuous or "degenerate." The argument that these laws protect society is baseless. How can an act performed in private by consenting adults harm society?

The current law makes oral or anal intercourse a felony whether performed by persons of the same or different sexes, whether the couple is married or not. Clearly absurd. The proposed revision makes homosexual conduct a Class C misdemeanor punishable by fine of \$200.00. It is less severe, but no less absurd. It still turns the State into a peeping Tom, exhibiting a perverse prurient interest in the private conduct of its citizens. It reflects a self-righteous moral bigotry unworthy of the respect for person required of a free society.

We urge you to vote for deletion of the section on homosexual activity in the revised penal code and to vote for repeal of the current sodomy statute. We are not asking for a favor or a privilege; we are asking for our civil rights and we are prepared to pursue the same course as other minorities to obtain them should it become necessary.

May we ask your assistance in completing the attached brief questionnaire, which information and compilation will be held in strict confidence and will be disseminated only in working with other State Legislators to achieve our ends. No public statement will be made regarding the specific replies from individual legislators. For your convenience, we have enclosed a stamped, addressed envelope for your reply.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Monday, June 18, 1973

HOUSTON CHRONICLE

★★

Section 1, Page 11 INTEGRITY/HOUSTON



Most Legislators Didn't Answer

From R. Francis Thompson, 3957 Kirby Dr.

Results of a survey conducted by Integrity/Houston, in which the legislators of the State of Texas were asked their opinion on civil rights in general and homosexual rights in particular, pointed out the attitude of our representatives far beyond the questions asked. These people, elected by the voters of the State of Texas, did not even bother, for the most part, to answer the questionnaire. Indeed, the vast majority didn't bother to return it, even though a stamped, return envelope was enclosed.

This is a situation which goes far beyond the issue of homosexual rights. It should be the concern of every thinking citizen in this state. For these men to totally and contemptuously ignore our legitimate questions is a situation beyond belief. It is their right and duty to vote in the legislature as their conscience directs, if they have one, which at this point I believe we have good reason to question. It was also their right to answer the questionnaire either in the affirmative or the negative.

But to not answer at all or to totally ignore it was a gross breach of the trust the people have placed in them.

of opposite sex are eligible for a marriage license—an obvious reaction to gay marriage agitation around the nation. This