

MASW Human Rights Task Force
Meeting Report
3 pm, December 2, 2008
Center for Social Justice
606 East Capitol, Jefferson City

Present: Don Love – Chair, Bruce Alspaugh, Nancy Browning, Maria Cepeda, Robin Corderman, Josh Ewing, Kate Koch (by phone), Eric Krekel, Carol Ann Zablocki

Next meeting: 01.22.2009, 1:00 p.m., MASW-Center for Social Justice 606 E. Capitol Ave. Jefferson City, MO 65101

A. General procedures:

1. meetings will be monthly during the legislative session and bi-monthly otherwise, that is, January, February, March, April, May, June, August, October, December), usually at the Social Justice Center (although we will look for opportunities to schedule meetings to coincide with important events organized by our members in other parts of the state) in the early afternoon.
2. Meetings will alternate between taking place in person and via conference call. (Note: Conference call is an option even for in person meetings.)

B. Review of priorities

1. Discussion took place about MASW and the issues covered by the organization. Josh gave an overview of the Eight Task Forces of MASW (HR, Economic Justice, Asset Development, Criminal Justice, Education Policy, Health and Mental Health, Affordable Housing and Homelessness, and Hunger, as well as activities of the organization.
2. This was followed by a review of the 2009 Policy Statement and Goals of the HRTF.

C. Membership : Group was generally in agreement that the HRTF should be comprised of many diverse groups.

1. Possibilities mentioned included: AJ Bockelman, director of PROMO (St Louis-based LGBT rights organization), more disability advocates, Kylar Broadhus, a Lincoln University business professor who is active on transgender issues.
2. Don now remembers that he was supposed to include Dana Klar in the group; she's a MASW board member, an American Indian (United Houma Nation) and a professor at Lindenwood focusing on American Indian legal issues.
3. Group should be thinking and bring suggestions to January meeting.

D. Issues

1. Immigration

- a. (follow established lead of Jennifer and Courtney; help to share their expertise with the rest of the state; identify and work with programs in other parts of the state; track and respond to legislation)
- b. Help get MIRA/MASW presentation around state
- c. Same-sex couples and immigration issues
- d. English as a Second Language

2. Disabilities

- o Track and support during legislative session: bills related to accessibility, older adults remaining at home, universal design homes (safe and comfortable for everyone), Medicaid waivers
- o Seek out more input on this issue from other disability advocates

3. Racial Discrimination

- o Much work needed across MO regarding racial discrimination, biracial discrimination, discrimination in housing, discrimination in employment, American Indian issues
- o Ward Connerly coming back to MO with his Anti-Affirmative Action Ballot Initiative
- o <http://wecanmo.org/>

4. Education

- o Anti-Bullying Efforts, with inclusion of categories; cyber bullying
- o Equal funding, vouchers
- o Dream Act (post-secondary education for undocumented students)

5. Sexual orientation and gender identification

- o recognition of domestic partners, non-discrimination legislation, anti-bullying efforts
- o Central Chapter has been promoting anti-bullying programs in Jefferson City Schools; the effort could translate to other locales. Missouri NEA (with MASW member Ann Jarrett) would make a good ally state wide.
- o Adding "Sexual Orientation" to State Human Rights Act

6. Employment

- o E-Verify
- o Access to documents (Birth certificates, etc.)
- o Efforts to weaken Human Rights Act (change definition of discrimination, demand higher burden of proof, weaken sanctions against retaliation)
- o Springfield efforts to improve protection by broadening protective categories in city ordinances.

7. Health: equal access

8. Voter I.D./Voter Protection

- o Been an issue of the HRTF in the past

E. Priorities: Immigration is a natural priority because undocumented workers are currently targeted. Other priorities will no doubt emerge as we respond to legislation and events throughout the state. HRTF will do its best to support the initiatives of members and cooperating organizations; please keep us informed on the issues you are addressing

F. Pre-filed Legislation: Josh presented a list as of this date. We will make an effort to keep it up to date.

G. Columbia Domestic Partner Registry: The MASW HRTF voted to support efforts to create a domestic partner registry in Columbia. Bruce and/or Don may speak for the HRTF on this issue at meetings.