

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

May 5, 2005

LB 425

employees of the court, or any who appear in a judge's courtroom. The concept of sexual orientation being a basis for discrimination is recognized throughout this country. Many of the so-called Fortune 500 companies have adopted a policy against this kind of discrimination because their interest is in what they call the bottom line or profit. They know, and some of these executives themselves are of that persuasion, that there is talent, ability, possessed by people who are described, and who describe themselves, as gay if they're male, lesbian if they're female. What is being sought by these companies are people who can do the job effectively and efficiently and help that company earn money. Universities have people on their staffs who are gay or lesbian. People who are gay and lesbian are everywhere. For all I know, some are on this floor. I don't inquire into matters of that kind because it is none of my concern. If any person, whether gay, lesbian, straight, hetero, or whatever term is used, engages in inappropriate conduct, appropriate corrective action may be taken. What discrimination means is that negative or hurtful conduct or policies are directed against people solely on the basis of their sexual orientation, not because they violated a work rule such as coming to work on time, doing your job, putting in a more or less honest day's work for more or less fair wage. It means, eat your spinach, brush your teeth, bathe and observe the rules of hygiene, be courteous, be respectful, work and play well with others, all of the things that we heard when we were growing up that civilized people ought to do when they're interacting with each other. None of that is waived. What this amendment is attempting to do here, what the bill that I have languishing in the Judiciary Committee now, and similar bills which I've offered down through the years, all of that is aimed at the principle that our brothers and our sisters are our brothers and our sisters. We should treat them the way we desire to be treated. I have not been treated the way I desire to be treated. People of my complexion have never been treated that way throughout history. Instead of putting in me a hatefulness that makes me want to get even and make other people hurt the way we have hurt, instead causes me to understand the hurtfulness of that kind of mistreatment, and I want to alleviate it wherever I can. One of the things that troubled me when I was much younger--as Billy Joel sang, "When I wore a