



The Ohio State University Alumni Association
Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Alumni Society

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OSU GLBT Alumni Society Reacts to Miami University Domestic Partner Challenge.

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Alumni Society of The Ohio State University commends all of the Ohio universities including The Ohio State University who are continuing to stand up for the rights of gay and lesbian staff members by continuing to offer domestic partner benefits for their employees and students. This commendation was in response to a suit filed by State Representative Tom Brinkman Jr., R-Cincinnati, alleging that Miami University's policy of providing insurance to the domestic partners of university employees is in violation of Ohio's Marriage Amendment which was passed by voters in 2004. Brinkman, whose children attend Miami University, alleges that Miami has tried to create a legal status that approximates marriage.

Jack Miner, President of Ohio State's GLBT Alumni Society said "This is a huge concern for all of the institutions because the amendment could force the schools to discriminate and we will without question lose some of the best and brightest faculty, staff, and students."

None of the public institutions in Ohio who offer domestic partner benefits, including The Ohio State University, Ohio University, and Cleveland State University, have issued reactions but are all continuing to offer their benefit programs.

The Butler County Common Pleas court suit says Miami is trying to provide "a legal status which approximates marriage to those in a relationship whose composition disallows it to qualify for status as a marriage."

It says Brinkman "desires that his tax dollars and tuition payments be utilized lawfully, and not applied by the university to finance the constitutional violation."

Brinkman, also represented in the suit by the Arizona-based Christian legal group Alliance Defense Fund, seeks a declaratory judgment and injunction against the university's domestic partnership policy, plus legal fees.

Miami spokesman Richard Little said Tuesday evening that the university hadn't seen the lawsuit yet, and that it came as a surprise. He said Brinkman has been a supporter of the university.

"It's not against the university, it's against a policy that wastes taxpayers' money," Brinkman said. "I just want them to cease the policy that goes against an amendment that was overwhelmingly approved by voters."

The university estimates about 30 people use some part of the university benefits package through the policy that took effect in June 2004, Little said. "It's not a significant financial issue," he said.

The mission of the OSU Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Alumni Society is to promote the best interest of the University's GLBT alumni, as well as assist with the educational needs of current students. The society does this by providing fellowship and professional relationships among alumni, students, faculty, staff and friends of the society and by advocating for equality for GLBT alumni, students, faculty and staff.

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