

# Family Diversity

PROJECT NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 1989

## GOALS CAN BECOME A REALITY

### Implementation Activities Move Family Diversity Agenda Forward

On May 19, 1988, the Los Angeles City Task Force on Family Diversity issued its final report suggesting more than 100 ways in which the public and private sectors can improve the quality of life for local families. One year later, dozens of the proposals have been adopted or are moving forward.

The first issue of this newsletter is primarily devoted to reporting on the progress that has been made in implementing the recommendations of the Los Angeles Task Force. These progress reports demonstrate that "family diversity" is a powerful coalition-building approach whose time has come. The approach has caught the interest of a broad array of elected and appointed officials, educators, religious leaders, employers, union activists, and most important of all: families.

The innovative proposals of the Los Angeles Task Force would not have been possible without the cooperative efforts of many people and organizations: Councilman Michael Woo who convened the group; the co-chairs and 36 members who served diligently for two years on the project; the principal consultant who wrote the final report; the many witnesses who testified at the public hearings; the students who provided research assistance; the organizations which provided in-kind services; and most especially, the major benefactors who contributed money (Lloyd E. Rigler and Larry E. Deutch Foundation, MECLA Foundation, Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, Pacific Bell, Richard Dennis, and GTE California).

Mayor Tom Bradley deserves special recognition for promoting the report and its recommendations. The mayor distributed the report to all city agencies and asked for a feasibility analysis of specific proposals.

City Attorney James Hahn was given a large agenda by the Task Force. To his credit, Hahn has promised to take action on 10 proposals directed to his office.

The City Council, City Departments, and City Commissions are beginning to implement some recommendations. However, more action is needed.

You or your organization can stimulate further implementation by ordering the final report, reading it, targeting one recommendation, developing an action plan, and then making your goal become a reality.

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## **DOMESTIC PARTNER BENEFITS GAIN CITY COUNCIL APPROVAL**

**Action.** City employees who have domestic partners may soon be eligible for family sick leave and bereavement leave as a result of motions adopted by the Los Angeles City Council.

On May 20, 1988, the Council's Committee on Government Operations held a public hearing on the issue in response to a recommendation of the Task Force on Family Diversity. The final report of the Task Force was issued on May 19, 1988.

In a divided vote, the Government Operations Committee sent its report to the full City Council recommending expansion of leave policies to include domestic partners. Councilmembers Michael Woo and Gloria Molina supported the measure. Councilwoman Joan Flores opposed it.

On October 4, 1988, the full City Council voted to extend leave benefits to domestic partners by adopting the majority report of the Government Operations Committee. The vote was 10 in favor and 2 opposed. Councilmembers Joan Flores and Ernardi Bernardi voted no.

Specifically, the City Council approved the measure "in concept" and referred it to the Executive Employee Relations Committee (EERC) to work out the details and report them back to the council.

Meeting in executive session on February 23, 1989, the EERC voted to approve the extension of leave benefits to domestic partners. Members of the EERC include Mayor Tom Bradley and Councilmembers John Ferraro, Marvin Braude, Joy Picus, and Zev Yaroslavsky. The City Attorney and Chief Administrative Officer advise the EERC. City Attorney James Hahn was supportive of the domestic partnership proposal. Chief Administrative Officer Keith Comrie opposed the measure.

The recommendation of the EERC will be considered by the full City Council when it meets in executive session. Once the City Council gives its final approval, full implementation of the proposal is expected

to take about one year. Appropriate language will need to be included in the contracts of all city unions as they are renewed. Once union contracts are updated, the City Council should amend the Administrative Code of the City to grant such benefits to nonrepresented employees.

**Recommendation Status.** When completed, these actions by the City Council will implement family diversity recommendation 104.

## **MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS MOVE TO CREATE A CITY COMMISSION ON DISABILITY**

**Action.** Last September, Mayor Tom Bradley proposed that the City of Los Angeles create a Commission on Disability. The panel would represent the interests of people with disabilities in the city's decision-making processes.

On February 10, 1989, the City Council's Public Health, Human Resources, and Senior Citizen's Committee approved the proposal and referred the matter to the full City Council.

The new Commission will replace the mayor's Advisory Council on Disabilities. The change is intended to secure more participation and interaction with councilmembers, to elevate the status of disability issues on the city's political agenda, and to provide more staffing and resources than was previously available to the advisory council.

The proposal to create a city Commission on Disability emerged during the public hearings conducted by the Task Force on Family Diversity in April 1987. For several years, the County of Los Angeles has had an active Commission on Disability.

Two years ago, the city created a Disability Access Appeals Board to improve physical access to buildings in Los Angeles.

**Recommendation Status.** Final approval by the City Council, when it occurs, will implement family diversity recommendations 80 and 106.

## LOS ANGELES CITY ATTORNEY WILL ACTIVELY IMPLEMENT FAMILY DIVERSITY PROPOSALS

**Action.** In a letter to Mayor Tom Bradley, Los Angeles City Attorney James Hahn has pledged to implement more than 10 family diversity recommendations directed to his office.

**Insurance Discrimination.** Hahn will send a letter to the state Insurance Commissioner requesting that copies of any lifestyle discrimination complaints involving consumers residing in Los Angeles be forwarded to his office. Hahn promised to take appropriate legal action if he determines that unfair business practices are occurring. **Recommendation Status.** This action will implement recommendation 32.

**Insurance Task Force.** Hahn will convene an Insurance Task Force on Lifestyle Discrimination to make recommendations to improve the manner in which lifestyle discrimination is handled by state and local agencies with apparent jurisdiction over arbitrary or unfair business practices. The task force will include representatives of the City Attorney's Office, Attorney General's Office, Insurance Commissioner's Office, State Department of Fair Employment and Housing, civil rights groups, consumer protection groups, and the insurance industry. **Recommendation Status.** This action will implement recommendation 33.

**Family Violence Task Forces.** Hahn will convene a one-year Task Force on Gay and Lesbian Family Violence to include representatives of the Police Department, City Attorney's Office, District Attorney's Office, community counseling agencies, shelter staff, and representatives from the gay and lesbian community. It will make a needs assessment and make specific recommendations to improve the way in which domestic violence programs and services handle same-sex partner abuse. Hahn also will convene a one-year Task Force on Immigrant Family Violence to in-

clude representatives of the city's Police Department, City Attorney's Office, relevant county departments, Los Angeles Unified School District, Regional Center on Disability, Department of Aging, private-sector service providers, and organizations representing immigrant communities. It will do a needs assessment and make recommendations regarding culturally-relevant, multilingual education and intervention programs. **Recommendation Status.** This will implement recommendations 47 and 44.

**Disability Training.** The Task Force recommended that the City Attorney provide training to prosecutors on disability and its relationship to criminal investigation and prosecution. Hahn has asked the Chief of his Criminal Branch to include a section on the special needs of disabled crime victims and witnesses in the City Attorney training programs. **Recommendation Status.** This action will implement recommendation 78.

**Other Actions.** -- As legislation is proposed where the term "family" is involved, the Hahn supports and will continue to favor an inclusive definition. -- Hahn's office will continue to cooperate with Fair Housing Councils to develop plans to keep landlords from engaging in unfair housing practices. -- The City Attorney's Office is currently examining how elder abuse cases are prosecuted and will incorporate elder abuse into its Domestic Violence Unit. Adoption of a deferred prosecution program is under consideration. -- The City Attorney continues to monitor a housing case in the federal courts challenging regulations that would end rent subsidies to households which cannot prove that all members are documented residents. **Recommendation Status.** These actions help implement recommendations 12, 25, 49, and 89.

**Legal Opinions.** To implement recommendations 23 and 85, Hahn soon will render opinions on the illegality of housing practices against families with children and consumer discrimination against unmarried couples.

## **MECLA QUIZZES CANDIDATES ON FAMILY DIVERSITY ISSUES**

Candidates for federal, state, and local government offices routinely seek the endorsement of the Municipal Elections Committee of Los Angeles (MECLA). MECLA's backing can bring financial support as well as votes.

This year, MECLA requested incumbents and challengers to disclose their positions on recommendations of the Task Force on Family Diversity, especially those having direct impact on the gay and lesbian community. Candidates were sent a family diversity questionnaire and asked to return them when they were interviewed by MECLA's political action committee. MECLA then based its endorsements, in part, on the responses of the candidates to the family diversity proposals.

## **MAYOR BRADLEY PROPOSES NEW HOUSING COMMISSION**

In his budget plan for 1989-90, Mayor Bradley has proposed the creation of a City Housing Commission. The new Commission will develop a comprehensive housing policy for the city and coordinate housing programs that are presently scattered throughout several boards and departments.

**Recommendation Status.** Approval of this proposal by the City Council will implement recommendation 21.

## **CITY CONTRACTOR LAW AMENDED TO PROHIBIT SEXUAL ORIENTATION BIAS**

Effective immediately, contractors who do business with the City of Los Angeles must certify that they do not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation.

Approving a motion by Councilmembers Yaroslavsky and Woo, the City Council has added "sexual orientation" to an ordinance prohibiting discrimination by city contractors on the basis of race, religion, national origin, sex, and disability.

City Attorney James Hahn and Board of Public Work President Edward Avila have promised to advise the Council on the need to add "medical condition" and "marital status" to the contractor law.

**Recommendation Status.** Adding "sexual orientation" to the city contractor law partially implements recommendation 107. Full implementation will occur when the contractor law is amended to include "medical condition" and "marital status."

## **BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS SUPPORTS CONCERNS OF DISABLED, GAYS, WOMEN, AND RACIAL MINORITIES**

In letters to Mayor Bradley, the Board of Public Works has expressed its support for several family diversity proposals.

Board President Edward Avila indicated the Board will use its resources to encourage television networks to hire more diversified staff in positions of authority. Avila also has instructed staff to advise the City Council of the need to add "marital status" and "medical condition" to the city contractor law.

Avila stressed that the Board supports increased physical access for people with disabilities. Curb cuts for the disabled are required by the Board on all publicly and privately financed street improvement projects. Each year the Board requests funding of gas tax financed projects for installing more curb cuts at intersections. The Board also requires access facilities for the disabled on all new buildings and when making modifications to existing public buildings.

Responding to employee benefit proposals, Avila informed the Mayor that the City needs to modernize its benefit system, eliminate marital status discrimination in benefit packages, and develop more on-site dependent care centers.

**Recommendation Status.** These actions of the Board of Public Works help implement recommendations 75, 100, 102, 97, and 107.

## **LOS ANGELES SCHOOL BOARD ADOPTS ANTI-SLUR POLICY**

**Action.** The Board of Education of the Los Angeles Unified School District has resolved to end slurs and name calling on campuses throughout the district.

In a resolution adopted last October, the board prohibited the willful or negligent use of slurs against any person on the basis of race, language spoken, color, sex, religion, handicap, national origin, immigration status, age, sexual orientation, or political belief.

The board directed each school in the district to develop a code of discipline to implement the anti-slur policy.

**Recommendation Status.** The school board's adoption of the anti-slur policy and enforcement through each school's code of behavior implements family diversity recommendation 58(c) and (d).

## **LOS ANGELES SCHOOL DISTRICT CREATES TASK FORCE DEALING WITH GANG-RELATED ACTIVITIES**

**Action.** The Los Angeles School District has convened a district-wide task force to address gang activities.

The task force includes representatives from local, state, and federal government agencies, private-sector industry, community groups, school administrators, teachers, parents, and students.

The task force will help develop a curriculum for K-12 which teaches the history and methodology of non-violence as a method of conflict resolution, and which provides youth with strategies for dealing with violent messages in their environment. The group also will make program recommendations outlining steps the district can take to address issues of safety on and near school campuses.

**Recommendation Status.** The creation of this task force implements family diversity recommendation 66.

## **EDUCATION COMMISSIONS SUPPORT FAMILY DIVERSITY PROPOSALS**

**Action.** The Education Commissions of the Los Angeles Unified School District voted to support all recommendations involving school curricula and programs as outlined in the final report of the Task Force on Family Diversity.

Christopher McCauley and Nora Baladerian, co-chairs of the Family Diversity Task Force, and consultant Thomas F. Coleman, addressed a joint meeting of the commissions last November. Afterwards, commissioners submitted ballots indicating their positions on the education recommendations.

Members of the American Indian Education Commission, Asian/Pacific Education Commission, Black Education Commission, Mexican American Education Commission, Commission on Sex Equity, and Special Education Commission attended the meeting and cast ballots.

The education recommendations and results of the survey of the commissioners will be presented to the Community Relations Committee of the Board of Education in the near future.

**Recommendation Status.** The recommendations receiving the greatest level of support from the Education Commissions include: expanding peer counseling programs (rec. 52); sponsoring seminars on AIDS (rec. 53); implementing the model curriculum on human rights and genocide (rec. 55); adopting a statewide anti-slur policy (rec. 58a); implementing a model curriculum on suicide prevention (rec. 54); providing more on-site child care (rec. 59); including nature and culture of disability in mandatory cultural curriculum (rec. 79).

Commissioners also expressed a high level of support for the proposal to expand the "hands across the campus" program to include disability prejudice, sexism, and homophobia. (rec. 57) That program promotes tolerance and understanding of diversity, but has limited its focus to racial, ethnic, and religious minorities.

## **CALIFORNIA LAWMAKERS ARE ASKED TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST UNMARRIED COUPLES**

**Action.** In a report just sent to the California Legislature, the Joint Select Task Force on the Changing Family has urged lawmakers to eliminate discrimination against unmarried couples, including older adults, people with disabilities, and gay and lesbian couples.

The recommendations dealing with elderly and disabled couples include:

- \* Adopting a "Vesper Marriage Act" as an option for persons 60 and older who would like to marry but who are economically prevented from doing so because survivor benefits from a previous marriage are terminated upon remarriage. A vesper marriage would recognize the couple as married, except for purposes of taxation, inheritance, and pension benefits.

- \* Working with the federal government to allow severely disabled persons to get married or cohabit without jeopardizing their benefits.

The state task force made a strong policy statement acknowledging domestic partners are one of many family structures in California. Specific recommendations dealing with domestic partners include:

- \* Ensuring that family-related employment policies define family broadly enough to encompass the diversity of today's families, regardless of their structure.

- \* Developing a family-related curriculum for grades K-12 that include information on changing family structures and family diversity.

- \* Ensuring that publicly-funded counseling services and those provided through private health plans serve not just individuals, but families, whatever their structure, including same-sex and opposite-sex unmarried couples.

- \* Amending the wrongful death statute to allow an adult survivor to sue for damages caused by the wrongful death of his or her domestic partner.

- \* Outlawing unfair insurance practices,

including rate discrimination, against unmarried couples.

Thomas F. Coleman, principal consultant to the Task Force on Family Diversity, is a member of the Joint Select Task Force on the Changing Family. The Legislature created the state task force in 1987 to advise lawmakers of changing family demographics and issues.

**Recommendation Status.** These actions implement recommendations 81, 86, 87, and 88.

## **HUMAN RELATIONS COMMISSION REVITALIZES ITS OPERATIONS**

**Action.** The Los Angeles City Human Relations Commission has developed ambitious plans to address some of the city's most challenging social problems.

The election of Christopher McCauley as commission president and the appointment of several new commissioners has stimulated new activities by the agency. McCauley secured private funding to hire a consultant to help revitalize its operations.

In his proposed 1989-90 budget, Mayor Bradley has included sufficient funding to create a new position of executive director and to support the commission's extensive agenda, which includes:

- \* A Hate Violence Reduction Committee to assist the city in better identifying hate crimes, improving agency responses, training police officers, generating more media attention, and creating better police-community relations.

- \* An Anti-Discrimination Committee to investigate discrimination against persons with disabilities, particularly in transportation, and also to look into discrimination against people with AIDS.

- \* A Community Conflict Resolution Committee to develop creative ways to deal with inter-group tensions among various segments of the city's population.

**Recommendation Status.** When an increase in staff and budget is approved by the City Council, recommendation 105 will be implemented.

## **FAMILY SERVICE AMERICA RECOMMENDS A FUNCTIONAL APPROACH TO DEFINING "FAMILY"**

Family Service America (FSA) is a network of nearly 300 local member agencies that provide counseling services and educational programs for individuals and families. FSA has adopted the following policy statement regarding the definition of family:

American family life reflects America's heritage of cultural and ethnic diversity. Family Service America recognizes pluralism of family form. [FSA] views the family primarily in terms of its status as a functional group rather than in terms of its form. Well functioning families are both a building block for and a support to the larger society. Such families provide emotional, physical and economic mutual aid to their members, assisting family members in both survival and well-being. Ideally, such families are characterized by intimacy, intensity, continuity and commitment among their members.

## **LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE ON THE CHANGING FAMILY IDENTIFIES FIVE BASIC FUNCTIONS OF FAMILIES**

The Joint Select Task Force on the Changing Family has just issued a report to the California Legislature. Adopting the functional approach to defining "family," the report identifies the family's five basic functions as:

- \* Maintaining the physical health and safety of family members by providing for their shelter, food, clothing, health care, and economic sustenance.
- \* Providing conditions for emotional growth, motivation, and self-esteem within a context of love and security.
- \* Helping to shape a belief system from which goals and values are derived, and encouraging shared responsibility for family and community.
- \* Teaching social skills and critical thinking, promoting lifelong education, and providing guidance in responding to culture and society.
- \* Creating a place for recreation and recuperation from external stresses.

## **POLICE CHIEF RESPONDS TO FAMILY DIVERSITY PROPOSALS**

**Action.** In a letter to Mayor Tom Bradley, Police Chief Darryl Gates expressed support for several family diversity recommendations directed to the police department.

**Protection of Homeless.** The Task Force noted that a large number of homeless persons were being victimized by criminals and that additional police protection was necessary. The police department has assigned additional uniformed officers to areas with high concentrations of homeless individuals. **Recommendation Status.** This action implements recommendation 16.

**Data on Disabled Crime Victims.** The Task Force recommended that the police department collect data on the disability status of crime victims. Chief Gates advised the Mayor that such data collection is feasible, subject to the revision of police reporting procedures and a computer program change. He indicated that this information could be useful in identifying trends and issues in need of police attention. **Recommendation Status.** If these procedural changes are approved by the Police Commission, recommendation 76 will be implemented.

**Task Force on Homeless Youth.** Chief Gates strongly supports the creation of an inter-agency Task Force on Homeless Youth to increase communication and coordination among the various agencies which provide needed services and to expand these services outside of the Hollywood area. **Recommendation Status.** If the City Council gives its approval to the creation of such a task force, recommendation 19 will be implemented. The Police Commission, Chief Gates or the chairman of the Police Committee of the City Council could present such a proposal to the full City Council.

**Child Abuse Prevention and Education (CAPE).** The Task Force recommended that a three-year pilot project dealing with child abuse prevention and education be established within one division

of the Police Department. Chief Gates and the Police Commission have submitted a budget request to implement this recommendation beginning with the 1989-90 budget. **Recommendation Status.** If the Mayor and City Council approve the budget request to create the pilot project, recommendation 43 will be implemented.

**Elder Abuse.** The Task Force recommended that an inter-agency Task Force on Elder Abuse be created to coordinate services to victims of elder abuse. Chief Gates has agreed that such a Task Force may be necessary. The Task Force also recommended that additional training of personnel should occur and that current record and referral systems of the city and the county should be evaluated. Chief Gates has indicated that such an evaluation is feasible. **Recommendation Status.** If the Department of Aging convenes an inter-agency task force, if the task force develops model training programs and evaluates existing data and referral systems, recommendation 48 will be implemented.

## **ACLU CALLS FOR EXPANSION OF MULTICULTURAL PROGRAM**

**Action.** "Hands Across the Campus" is a program sponsored by the American Jewish Committee and implemented by the Los Angeles Unified School District on more than a dozen high school campuses. The program promotes interracial and interreligious harmony and the eradication of discrimination against racial, ethnic, and religious minorities.

The Executive Committee of the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California has written to the American Jewish Committee indicating its support for the goals of "Hands Across" and asking that the program be expanded to include ageism, sexism, homophobia, and disability prejudice.

**Recommendation Status.** If the American Jewish Committee agrees to expand the scope of "Hands Across the Campus," recommendation 57 will be implemented.

**PROPOSALS FOR SENIORS  
GET BOOST FROM CITY'S  
DEPARTMENT OF AGING**

**Action.** In a letter to Mayor Tom Bradley, the General Manager of the city's Department of Aging has expressed support for several family diversity recommendations. Faye Washington informed the mayor that the task force report was useful and timely because the department is currently conducting a needs assessment of seniors living in Los Angeles. The department, which is an area agency on aging, will also use the task force report in the development of the 1989-93 Planning and Service Area Plan.

**Respite Care.** One family diversity proposal recommended that the Department of Aging help develop and implement respite care programs to assist caregivers. The department has recently developed a Respite Care Program. The program has identified respite care providers in the city that can provide in-home services through the existing Multipurpose Centers in all 15 city council districts. The department has also negotiated a contract with one of the providers, Comprehensive Nursing Services, Inc., to provide this service throughout the city. **Recommendation Status.** If properly funded, this action will implement recommendation 71.

**Elder Abuse.** The department is interested in becoming the lead coordinator of an ongoing Interagency Task Force on Elder Abuse. The department welcomes such an opportunity to work with the police department and the City Attorney's Office to establish specialized training, data collection, and tracking mechanisms in elder abuse cases, as well as the development of rehabilitation programs for offenders. **Recommendation Status.** If the Department of Aging convenes such an interagency task force, this will implement recommendation 48.

**Foster Grandparent Program.** The department is considering city sponsorship of a foster grandparent program or possibly co-

sponsoring such a program with the county. **Recommendation Status.** This action advances recommendation 69.

**CHILD CARE COORDINATOR ACTS  
ON FAMILY DIVERSITY PROPOSALS**

**Action.** In a letter to Mayor Bradley, the city's Child Care Coordinator, Patricia Lane, reported on actions being taken to implement family diversity proposals dealing with child care.

**Child Care for City Employees.** In January 1989, the city opened a child care facility in the City Hall complex to serve children of city and federal employees. The joint project with the federal government provides on-site child care for 100 children. A second facility is scheduled to open near the Convention Center later this year. **Recommendation Status.** This action partially implements recommendation 36.

**Assessment of City-Funded Child Care Programs.** One family diversity proposal recommended that the Child Care Coordinator evaluate the effectiveness of child care programs funded by the Community Development Department. As a first step in developing a plan to implement this recommendation, a team of CDD staff, the Child Care Coordinator, and interested professionals will make on-site visits at no less than two locations per month. Following the site reviews, the Review Team will meet to identify strengths, weaknesses, and development of an improvement plan. **Recommendation Status.** This action partially implements recommendation 39.

**Intergenerational Child Care.** The Department of Aging is developing plans to convening a time-limited Joint Task Force on Intergenerational Child Care with participation by the city's Child Care Coordinator and the Superintendent of the Los Angeles Unified School District. The Child Care Coordinator is exploring the potential of opening a child care facility on the grounds of Angelus Plaza, a senior housing facility in downtown Los Angeles. **Recommendation Status.** These actions advance recommendation 70.

## CALIFORNIA'S FAMILY LAW SYSTEM TO BE REVAMPED

California's system for judicially deciding family relations disputes is about to undergo major legal surgery.

Legislation recently approved by the Assembly Judicial Committee (ACR 30) would create California's first Family Relations Code. Currently, laws dealing with family relations matters are scattered throughout many different statute books.

Disputes involving family relations matters are frequently decided in several legal forums, such as the Criminal Court, Family Court, Probate Court, and Juvenile Court systems. The use of different courts and legal codes often causes contradictory results as well as serious hardships on children and other family members.

One proposal to change all this is being carried by Assemblywoman Jackie Speier (D-South San Francisco). Speier's motion would require the California Law Revision Commission to conduct a review of all statutes relating to the adjudication of child, family, and human relations matters and to draft a new code for consideration by state lawmakers within two years.

The idea for a Family Relations Code was initiated in a 1988 report issued by the Child Victim Witness Advisory Committee. That committee was created under 1986 legislation sponsored by Attorney General John Van de Kamp.

In addition to developing a Family Relations Code, the Advisory Committee also suggested that a new Family Relations Court be created so that all cases involving family disputes would be handled by one court rather than the current system of fragmented adjudication by different courts.

Earlier this year, the California Senate created a Task Force on Family Relations Court to evaluate the feasibility of creating a new Family Relations Division within the state's Superior Court system. The Senate Task Force is expected to issue its report by January 1990.

## MAJOR ZONING DECISIONS IN DENVER AND NEW YORK ACCEPT REALITY OF TODAY'S FAMILIES

The month of March brought with it major zoning decisions in Colorado and New York that will allow unrelated adults to live together in areas zoned for single families.

On March 24, New York State's highest court overturned an ordinance prohibiting four unrelated people from living together in a single family home. A unanimous court ruled that the Town of Brookhaven's zoning law violated the New York Constitution because it did not similarly restrict the number of related people who could live together.

Legal counsel for New York State's Conference of Mayors said the decision authorizes various groups of unrelated people, including unmarried couples and small groups of disabled or elderly persons, to live in areas restricted to single-family use.

At the core of the court's decision in Baer v. Town of Brookhaven was the concept of "functionally equivalent" families. The court ruled that if unrelated persons who live together are functioning like a more traditionally defined family unit, they must be considered a family for zoning purposes.

On March 27, the Denver City Council repealed a 36-year-old ordinance prohibiting two unrelated adults from living together in neighborhoods with an R-0 zoning classification.

Impetus for repeal of the zoning restriction came when a court case was filed in 1984 by an unmarried couple who had recently purchased a house. Responding to an anonymous complaint, a zoning inspector went to the couple's house and asked them about their marital status. When the inspector learned that the couple was not married, the city ordered them to move. The couple's lawsuit against the city will probably be dismissed now that the City Council has repealed the R-0 zoning restrictions.

## FAMILY DIVERSITY REPORTS GET WIDESPREAD DISTRIBUTION

**Initial Distribution.** Initially, the final report of the Task Force was distributed at a reception held on May 19, 1988. About 200 copies were given to guests, ranging from state and local elected officials and their representatives, to religious leaders, labor leaders, civil rights activists, educators, and service providers.

**Promotional Distribution.** Over the past year, seven hundred copies of the final report have been distributed on a complimentary basis to public officials and community leaders.

**Paid Distribution** Final reports, public hearing transcripts, and supplements have been mailed to individuals and agencies who ordered them along with a \$10 contribution. The following list typifies the agencies placing orders:

\* **Municipalities:** Pasadena (CA); Lakewood (CO); N.Y. City Comptroller, Health Dept., and Human Rights Commission; Longmont (CO); Seattle Office for Women's Rights; Spokane Area Agency on Aging; Sacramento Dept. of Social Services; Children's Bureau (L.A.);

\* **State Agencies:** California State Assembly; Mich. Office of Services to the Aging; Minn. Family and Children's Services;

\* **Religious Organizations:** Catholic Social Services (KY); American Jewish Committee (L.A.); Presbyterians for Gay Concerns (NJ); Coalition for Traditional Values; Lutheran Institute on Aging (NB); St. Phillips Church (NY);

\* **Private Service Providers:** Senior Services Inc. (Mich.); Washington County Hospital Assn. (MD); Quality Rehab. Services (NB); Covina Psychol. Services (CA); Kaiser Permanente (L.A.); Good Samaritan Hosp. (WA); Children's Hosp. (Oakland)

\* **Universities:** Barry U. (Miami); Loyola Law School (L.A.); U.C. Irvine; Carnegie Mellon U. (PA); Mt. St. Mary's College (L.A.); U. of Illinois; American U. (Wash. DC); U. of Indiana Law School; U. of Buffalo Law School.

## SPEAKERS ON FAMILY ISSUES PROVIDED TO MEDIA, POLITICAL, RELIGIOUS, CIVIL RIGHTS GROUPS

During the past year, the task force report and recommendations have been promoted through appearances on radio and television programs and through presentations by task force leaders at meetings of various government agencies and private organizations.

The following is an example of the media and community outreach done by Christopher McCauley and Nora Baladerian (co-chairs) and by Thomas F. Coleman (principal consultant):

- \* Los Angeles City Council (May '88)
- \* KPFK-FM "Open Journal" (May '88)
- \* MECLA Civic Event (May '88)
- \* Human Relations Comm. (Jun '88)
- \* Community Relations Conf. (Jun '88)
- \* ACLU Gay Rights Chapter (Jul '88)
- \* Affirmation (Mormon) (Jul '88)
- \* Interfaith Coalit. on Aging (Sep '88)
- \* KHJ-TV "Community Feedback" (Sep '88)
- \* L.A. Education Commissions (Nov '88)
- \* Sac./Yolo Family Conference (Dec '88)
- \* New York City Bar Assn. (Jan '89)
- \* Harvard Law School (Apr '89)
- \* Cal. Council of Churches (Apr '89)
- \* W. Hollywood City Council (Apr '89)

## NEW YORK'S HIGHEST COURT TO DECIDE DEFINITION OF "FAMILY"

The New York Court of Appeals heard oral arguments on April 26, 1989, in Braschi v. Stahl Associates. The court has been asked to decide whether or not the legal definition of "family" should include persons not related by blood, marriage, or adoption.

Thomas F. Coleman filed a friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of Family Service America (FSA) and several other organizations. The FSA brief (70 pages) cited the report of the Los Angeles City Task Force on Family Diversity. The brief includes a comprehensive analysis of family definitions and demographics. Copies of the FSA brief are available upon request.

## PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE

**Report: Task Force on Family Diversity (City of Los Angeles) \$10.00\***

Includes sections on: families in America, California, and Los Angeles; public policy and the definition of family; insurance; housing and homelessness; family violence and abuse; employee benefits; child care; families with elderly or disabled members; immigrant families; domestic partnership families; school programs and curricula. (120 pages)

**Report: Task Force on the Changing Family (State of California) \$10.00\***

Includes sections on: family functions; basic principles of good family policy; work and family policies and programs; caring for children; caring for elders; teen parents; health care issues; families in economic peril; breaking generational barriers. (180 pages)

**Amicus Brief: Family Service America (New York Court of Appeal) \$10.00\***

Includes information on: definition of family in American jurisprudence; legislative definitions of family in the State of New York; judicial decisions on the definition of family; constitutional considerations; family demographics in New York City. (70 pages)

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