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Representatives Dean Corren and David Zuckerman are two of the six members of the House who signed onto H694, a bill that would include same-gender couples in Vermont's marriage statutes.

Democrat David Deen of Westminister, Republican William Suchmann of Chester, Democrat Mary Sullivan of Burlington, and Progressive David Zuckerman of Burlington signed onto the bill. Corren, also a Progressive, called it the most expedient and effective way of dealing with the Supreme Court's *Baker* decision.

The bill was assigned to the House Judiciary Committee to

include in its considerations.

Corren said it was inspiring to draft "the remedy for what may be the last great instance of legal discrimination based solely on bigotry. There is a growing momentum for genuine equal treatment, and a realization that domestic partnership will not work."

Bill co-sponsor Suchmann made his support clear in a December 30 letter distributed in the legislature and to news-

papers around the state. In the letter he asked fellow legislators to set aside emotional personal issues and do what he said was the right thing.

Support for H.694 was not difficult to find, Corren said. While not everyone was willing to sign on as a sponsor, many legislators indicated a willingness to vote for the bill if it received the approval of the judiciary committee. In particular, they will be watching the reaction of the committee's highly respected chair, Tom Little of Shelburne, whose backing is considered important for its passage. ▼



(Left to right) Representatives Mike Edwards and Alice Nitka listened as Lauri Morrison of Norwich described keeping her family's personal life a secret for years. She was one of at least two people who made the decision to out themselves at the public hearing.



Peter Harrigan (right) and his partner Stan Baker are one of the three couples Beth Robinson (left) represented in *Baker v Vermont*. Robinson's co-counsel Susan Murray and Mary Bonauto attended the public hearing on January 25.

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