

Wilmington's Mayor James M. Baker enthusiastically supported H.B. 99:

May 15, 2003
The Honorable Ruth Ann Minner
Governor
Dover, Delaware

Dear Governor Minner:

I write to you today to state my strong and unequivocal support for House Bill 99. The City of Wilmington promotes and supports equal opportunity for all people in employment and the awarding of City contracts, as found in our City Code, Section 35-111. Our legislation is clear and is meant to convey to all who are associated with Wilmington government or seek to do business with us that we operate in an atmosphere of justice, with respect for equal and fair opportunities for all people.

Some suggested a few years ago that were the City to adopt such legislation containing the words "sexual orientation" that we would subject the citizens of Wilmington to legal challenges or that we would be welcoming frivolous lawsuits. There have been no challenges and there have been no problems at all associated with our decision to move the City of Wilmington forward in this regard.

Some issues, such as those associated with a person's sexual orientation, present questions and concerns that challenge long-held beliefs and practices, making change difficult for many to accept. I watched and listened and then protested as this country tolerated practices and supported excuses and reasons that made it acceptable for a person to be denied opportunities based on a God-given quality such as the color of their skin. I believe that a person's sexual orientation is a natural part of human nature and is not something that a person has the ability to choose.

It is my honor and pleasure to state my support for the bill, which has actually strengthened in the past year or so in the face of comments and arguments against it that could serve to deny a person their freedoms and liberties. Thank you for this opportunity to present my position and to state our practices in Wilmington government.

Sincerely,

James M. Baker
Mayor