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PRESS RELEASE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA RURAL GAY CAUCUS

DATE: May 13, 1976

FROM: Allentown, Pa.

SUBJECT: Legislative action- Repeal of the Sodomy Statutes

SUBMITTED BY: Secretary to the Legislative Committee- P. R. G. C.
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The Rural Gay Caucus in Pennsylvania, comprised of representatives from twenty-one gay organizations not located in Philadelphia or Allegheny Counties, has announced the formation of a permanent Legislative Committee to succeed the highly successful Gay Lobby Day Committee. William Hollabaugh, Ph.D., of Bethlehem has been named chairperson of the newly formed committee.

In their first meeting here, the committee composed a statement of purpose, and began coordination of a very ambitious program in support of Senator Hill's Bill for Repeal of the Sodomy Statutes. Their statement reads simply: "To promote the political participation of gay people on local, state, and federal levels as an arm of the Pennsylvania Rural Gay Caucus."

The primary goal in their efforts to support repeal is to have 50,000 individual letters written by groups and individuals to State Legislators in Harrisburg. This goal, if realized, would deliver an average of over 200 letters per legislator.

Bill Hollabaugh has stated, "We realize the enormity of our task. But, the Caucus believes repeal of the Sodomy Statutes to be a giant step for gay rights, possibly the step to which the guarantee of other rights is appended."

To accomplish their goal, the committee is preparing thousands of copies of two letters- one whose primary appeal is to gay persons, the other of which emphasises that the Sodomy Statutes apply to heterosexuals. These letters will be distributed for inclusion in mailings of the member organizations and cooperating chapters of N.O.W. and the ACLU.

Hollabaugh also said, "We see our effort as cooperative with others being planned. The effort of the Council on Sexual Minorities, for instance, is directed toward stimulating constituents to visit their legislators. The Caucus has placed its emphasis on letters with the determination to involve not only activist gays, but their closeted friends, and families. A truly enormous quantity of letters would establish the power of gays to move voters." Other plans are being made to support repeal, according to the committee, but, not announced, so as not to dilute the effort of having the letters written.

"We are throwing all our resources into this one." said Hollabaugh.