



**The Libertarian Party of Oregon is Neutral on HB 4152, as we reject the authority of the State to license or withhold the licensure of private marriage contracts.**

Since the founding of the Libertarian Party in 1971, we have supported and recognized the rights of consenting adults to enter into private marriage agreements which could be solemnized by various civic or religious associations. For 43 years, the State of Oregon refused to recognize the marriages of many of our party members because they were consensual relationships between adults of the same sex. During the AIDS epidemic of the 1980's, the lack of an Oregon state license prohibited many Oregonian men to visit their dying spouses in Oregon hospitals.

Starting in 1938, The State of Oregon required blood tests and medical exams for marriage license applicants. These medical exams included pseudoscientific psychiatric tests to determine "feeble-mindedness" and thus a referral to the state Eugenics board for compulsory sterilization. Marriage licenses would be refused for positive syphilis tests *in perpetuity* even after antibiotics had been discovered.

As of January 1 this year, a 17-year old who could obtain a Marriage license last Christmas cannot obtain one on Martin Luther King day. Perhaps soon it will be raised to the new arbitrary adult age of 21.

When Oregon was founded as a state, the State would not issue any marriage licenses to Blacks or "Chinamen."

From January 1 1866 until January 1, 1951, the state of Oregon would not issue a marriage license to a white person if the applicant spouse was a "Chinaman" "Hawaiian" Native American, or Black person, even if the Roman Catholic Church had conducted a marriage ceremony. Cohabiting couples, especially white-Native Americans were put at a disadvantage in probate court and could even be criminally incarcerated.

We do not forget this.

At most, the State can provide marriage registration services as a convenience for clarifying legal matters. Otherwise, if a private couple says they are married, the State should respect their right.

*The Libertarian Party of Oregon, founded in 1971 as an anti-war reaction to the War in Vietnam, is the state affiliate of the third largest political party in the United States. We currently represent over 20,000 registered Oregonians but speak for a silent majority of nonaffiliated voters. Over the years, our advocacy has advanced policies that would never have been considered by the Monoparty such as gay liberation and cannabis legalization.*