Your Name

Instructor Name

Course Number

Date

Letter to the Editor

Re: Goldenstein, Taylor. “Texas Judge Gets a Warning for Refusing to Perform Gay Marriages.” *HoustonChronicle.Com*, 3 Dec. 2019, https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/politics/texas/article/Texas-judge-gets-a-warning-for-refusing-to-14876988.php.

I am writing in response to the article on your website, "Texas Judge Gets a Warning for Refusing to Perform Gay Marriages," which has been updated on the 3rd of December. I found the article very important and useful as it has highlighted the ongoing core issue of the LGBTQ community and agree to the declaration made by the Texas Commission against the Republican judge, Dianne Hensley. The author discredits biased opinions of Hensley, who handled the matter according to her "conscience and religion" despite the law that was passed by the Supreme Court in 2015. According to the decision, all the states in America must legalize same-sex marriages and the people in the marriage must follow all relevant state laws (i.e., they must be of appropriate age and relation). Two states, Alabama and Texas, contain counties that have stopped issuing marriage licenses altogether. Hence, in those counties, same-sex couples cannot legally marry (nor can opposite-sex couples). However, the counties do recognize same-sex marriages performed elsewhere (Goldenstein).

My friend, who lives in one of the counties, is gay and is suffering because of these restrictions on same-sex marriages, and he would be traveling to another state for his marriage ceremony where he can perform a legalized marriage. Other gay people in these counties are compelled to follow the restrictions because not everybody can afford traveling and not everyone dares to go against the rules of the state. Therefore, the government should implement laws for legalizing same-sex marriage in all the fifty states of America. For example, there should be an increased focus on these two states, particularly so that no other judge would be authoritative enough to refuse the performance of same-sex marriages. Some states protect gay marriage and other LGBT rights; some states are silent about LGBT rights, and some states specifically disallow it. In my state, most LGBT rights are protected, and any rights not protected by law are legal by them not being explicitly illegal. In the South, it is very common for gay marriage to be outlawed like Texas, while in heavily liberal states such as California, LGBT rights are heavily protected. It was predicted that Texas would voluntary change its policies regarding same-sex marriages, but after looking at the decision of Hensley, I do not see a better future for the LGBTQ community. Being in the judiciary, it's the responsibility of the judges to perform all kinds of marriages and should not put their personal or religious matters in state laws.

In addition to that, there are other proactive solutions that the governmental sectors can do, like the Texas Justice Training center that aims to provide education for justices of the peace and which ensures justice and peace in the region, as discussed in the article. I think if the commission of justice will keep warning judges who refuse to perform same-sex marriages, then the situation will soon change for the LGBTQ community. It is a great step towards protecting their rights, and such biased decisions need to stop, and we need to try our best to protect their rights.

Xyz

3rd December 2019

Student, University of XYZ

**Work cited**

Durham, Martin. “Abortion, Gay Rights and Politics in Britain and America: A Comparison.” Parliamentary Affairs, vol. 58, no. 1, Jan. 2005, pp. 89–103. academic.oup.com, doi:10.1093/pa/gsi008.

Goldenstein, Taylor. “Texas Judge Gets a Warning for Refusing to Perform Gay Marriages.” HoustonChronicle.Com, 3 Dec. 2019, https://www.houstonchronicle.com/news/politics/texas/article/Texas-judge-gets-a-warning-for-refusing-to-14876988.php.