

## **Human Rights Civil Liberties**

HR-1

The Friends Committee on Legislation believes that freedom of thought, expression, press, religion, peaceful assembly, and the right to petition the government for redress of grievances are basic human rights as well as rights guaranteed by both the California and the U.S. Constitutions. We believe that, through a free exchange of ideas, the truth will prevail and democratic government will flourish. Full expression of information, opinions, and ideas- whether by individuals, the press, or groups of people demonstrating or lobbying in support of a cause- is essential for the formation of responsible judgment by individuals as members of society and for society itself, through its elected representatives in the state legislature.

As Friends, our most deeply held convictions arise from our religious beliefs. We view free, uncoerced, exercise of religions the most basic of human rights. Therefore, we view any imposition of participation in religious observance in a public setting (such as public schools) to be an abridgement of the freedom to choose one's own religion.

Religious and moral conviction should be recognized as defenses in criminal prosecutions of non-violent actions. The state of California should recognize the "necessity defense," wherein a person has committed a nonviolent unlawful act to avoid the commission of an act more wrongful.

The free exercise of religion should not lead to a person being deprived of economic rights or employment security.

We consider privacy to be a basic human right. People should be free to live their lives peacefully without intrusion, free from eavesdropping and surveillance whether private, cooperate or governmental. We oppose legislative attempts to circumvent constitutional protections.

No person should be denied civil liberties, employment or insurance because he or she is at risk, genetically or otherwise, of becoming ill or of contracting a communicable disease.

The Friends Committee on Legislation supports legislation that seeks to achieve these civil liberties and opposes legislation that would act to curtail or infringe upon these liberties.

Approved by Northern Regional Committee 09/16/00.  
Approved by Southern Regional Committee 10/26/00.