

Murray State University Alliance

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MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY BOARD OF REGENTS APPROVES FAIR NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Murray, KY - In its quarterly meeting, the Murray State University Board of Regents approved, by a 7-4 vote, including sexual orientation in the overall University non-discrimination policy.

"I am very happy with the Board's decision today," said Anthony Jones, Murray State student and Chair of MSU Alliance's Petition Committee. "To me, this action was the next step the Board should take in bringing its policies in-line with one another. Policies have already been put in place for the Students and Faculty individually, and this policy update today marks a move to further the consistency of MSU's policies, which includes adding sexual orientation into the overall non-discrimination policy."

The final vote, after much debate and discussion, was taken with 7 regents voting in the affirmative. Regents Bill Adams, Marilyn Buchanon, and Vickie Travis voted against the language's inclusion, as well as supporting a failed amendment that would have struck the term from the policy. Regent Peggy Hays abstained from both votes.

"I believe it is about acceptance and recognition rather than discrimination," Adams said. "It's a matter of principle. I believe it opens the door and broadens the likelihood for future expectations and benefits."

However, in his remarks in opposition to the proposed amendment, Regent Jeff Taylor (appellate judge, 2nd district) felt that "in terms of policy, it's a recognition of individuals and their rights."

Three people addressed the Board at the beginning of the meeting concerning this issue, including Richard Nelson of the Family Foundation. Nelson stated that such a policy was only in place at 2 of the public Universities in the Commonwealth, and stated that the term sexual orientation would also include protections for pedophiles. However, Board Chairman Alan Stout later remarked to the Board that he had Nelson's comments researched, and found that Nelson was not correct in his statement. Stout said that Murray State is the only public University in the Commonwealth without sexual orientation in its policy.

Due to the Board's action, all public state Universities now include the language in their policies.

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Murray State Alliance is a Murray State University Student Organization which exists for the purpose of supporting and promoting the specific needs and interests of homosexual, bisexual, transgender, and straight students, and their faculty, staff, and community allies.