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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
STAFF PERSONNEL BOARD

192 UNIVERSITY HALL
BERKELEY, CALIFORNIA 94720

February 22, 1980

BARRY WARREN
Personnel Office
2539 Channing Way
Berkeley Campus

Health Insurance for Domestic Partners of Gay Employees

Dear Mr. Warren:

The Staff Personnel Board has completed its review of your proposal for a policy to provide health insurance coverage for domestic partners of gay employees. The Staff Personnel Board reached its decision after consulting a number of sources of information, including United States statutes, law review journals, the University's present health carriers, the State Department of Insurance, and comparable universities. The Board has decided not to recommend a change from the present policy of providing coverage for legally married spouses and dependents. This prevailing practice is founded on the concept of legally required support, not actual financial dependency.

One consideration is that the case of gay domestic partners is only one of a variety of situations of persons living together with one voluntarily assuming financial responsibility for another. These include unmarried heterosexual couples, sons and daughters responsible for mothers or fathers, and persons responsible for any other relative or even a close friend. If health insurance coverage is extended to gay couples, the general feeling of health insurance carriers is that all others mentioned above might require similar treatment as a matter of equity. The issue would then incorporate the difficulty of designing equitable eligibility rules as well as the costs of the expanded coverage.

Costs would be a serious problem if all additional household members falling in the mentioned categories were permitted to enroll. The estimated increase in the University's contributions would exceed \$6.4 million annually, of which the State would be asked to fund approximately \$3 million, that portion of the University's costs derived from State funds.

The Staff Personnel Board feels that, at base, the issue you presented to us is a legal one; you may want to pursue a legislative change that would permit legal recognition of marriage between homosexuals.

Sincerely,



Sheldon Zedeck
Chairperson
Staff Personnel Board

cc: Staff Personnel Board Members
Assistant Vice President Stover