

Title: Resolution to End Discrimination in West Virginia

Budget Implications: None

Rationale:

WHEREAS, the 2012 Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church states in ¶ 162 J) *Equal Rights Regardless of Sexual Orientation*—Certain basic human rights and civil liberties are due all persons. We are committed to supporting those rights and liberties for all persons, regardless of sexual orientation. We see a clear issue of simple justice in protecting the rightful claims where people have shared material resources, pensions, guardian relationships, mutual powers of attorney, and other such lawful claims typically attendant to contractual relationships that involve shared contributions, responsibilities, and liabilities, and equal protection before the law. Moreover, we support efforts to stop violence and other forms of coercion against all persons, regardless of sexual orientation.¹ ; and

WHEREAS, four counties in the state of West Virginia, Berkeley, Jefferson, Morgan and part of Mineral, are within the Baltimore Washington Annual Conference; and

WHEREAS, it is within legal bounds in the state of West Virginia to fire someone simply because of their sexual orientation, deny someone a hotel room or evict them from housing because of their sexual orientation²; and

WHEREAS, all West Virginians deserve to be treated fairly by the laws of their own state regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity; and

WHEREAS, the Social Creed of the United Methodist Church states, “We commit ourselves to the rights of men, women, children, youth, young adults, the aging, and people with disabilities; to improvement of the quality of life; and to the rights and dignity of racial, ethnic, and religious minorities.

We believe in the right and duty of persons to work for the glory of God and the good of themselves and others and in the protection of their welfare in so doing; in the rights to property as a trust from God, collective bargaining, and responsible consumption; and in the elimination of economic and social distress;”³

SUBMITTED BY: Joanna Marceron, Pastor, Leetown/Marvin Chapel Cooperative Parish; Kathy Spitzer, Pastor, Arden UMC; Ed Grove, Pastor, Mount Wesley-Greensburg UMC’s; Luther Osment, Pastor, Camp Hill-Wesley UMC; Rev. Mildred Costello Martin, retired; Al Clipp, Pastor, Calvary UMC Martinsburg; Dee-Ann Dixon, Pastor, New Street UMC; Terri Cofiell, Pastor, Harmony UMC; Sharon Bourgeois, Pastor, Kabletown UMC; Rebecca Vardiman, Pastor, Centenary/Zion United Methodist Churches and endorsed by the Board of Church and Society.

RESOLUTION: THEREFORE, be it resolved that the members of the Baltimore-Washington Conference shall support and encourage legislation in the State of West Virginia entitled ENDHA, The Employment and Housing Non-Discrimination Act, that will add sexual orientation and gender identity to the Human Rights Act that already includes race, creed, disability, and sex.

¹ From *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*—2012. Copyright 2012 by The United Methodist Publishing House.

² *Fairness West Virginia*, www.fairnesswv.org

³ *The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church*—2012. ¶166 Copyright 2012 by The United Methodist Publishing House