

NATIONAL CONVERSATIONS

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SUPPORT 377A

a simple guide to giving feedback

LoveSingapore • Family and Home Gate • January 2013

Family and Home Gate <family.foundation.future@lovesingapore.org.sg>

Family and Home Gate Coordinator <jason.family@lovesingapore.org.sg>

To: Pastors & Leaders

“I will give them **singleness of heart and action**, so that they will always fear Me for their own good and the good of their children after them.” JEREMIAH 32:39

At Summit 2013, we talked and prayed extensively about the homosexual issue and its negative impact on the moral future of Singapore—IF—we, the Church, remain part of the silent majority. It’s time for action. **We must register our strongest unwavering support for Section 377A of the Penal Code.** Repealing 377A will, in effect, decriminalize sodomy or legalize homosexual acts. This will lead to the legalization of same-sex marriage down the road. We must unite to keep 377A intact as the moral norm, the law of the land. Is there not a cause? Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said in his 2012 National Day Rally Speech: “Singapore must be a HOME we love...where people want to get married, have children and bring up the next generation. Families are a big part of what Home means. Families are central to our sense of who we are.” Church, we must express our concerns to PM and our MPs that repealing 377A will make a mockery of this national dream. To facilitate action, we have put together a simple “Guide to Giving Feedback” for your wise and discerning response. But **first of all, please carefully read the following reminders and recommendations:**

- 1.** Remember: People who practise alternative sex are not our enemies. Each one is precious to God, a human soul of inestimable worth. We are moved with compassion for them. We must reach out to them to show we love and we care. This is our posture. This is the spirit of LoveSingapore.
- 2.** This Guide is not meant for mass distribution to everybody in your church or everybody you know on Planet Earth. The reason is simple. Not everyone will understand the rationale behind what we do. Not everyone will be sympathetic. That is to be expected.
- 3.** Therefore, it is very important for the Pastor to first identify an Action Group comprising the likeminded and the aligned—those who wish to give

feedback to Government and who need advice on how to go about this in an acceptable manner through the available channels. We must approach this with tremendous grace. No one should feel that they are being forced to take action blindly or against their will. We must emphasize the fact that through this exercise, we are helping the silent majority in the Church to speak up—courteously and courageously—as we are already encouraged to do by the Government through official feedback channels.

- 4.** Distribute the softcopy or hardcopy of this Guide only to likeminded, willing participants identified as your Action Group.
- 5.** If need be, hold a face-to-face closed-door session as soon as possible with your Action Group to educate them on the issues and the urgency. Walk them through the Guide. Allow time for Q-and-A to clarify things or allay any fears. The Pastor may arrange for similar subsequent sessions as more likeminded and willing members respond to the call for action.
- 6.** The Pastor may want to consider streamlining the feedback process. For example: decide on who among the Action Group will write to which Minister or feedback channel. And decide on the sequence of the communication, meaning the timing of when to send what feedback and to whom.
- 7.** To maintain a good standard, the Pastor may want to appoint a staff member or leader to vet and edit the drafts. This exercise can be done during the face-to-face closed-door session.
- 8.** Some Pastors may feel they are ready to address the issue from the pulpit. If need be, invite the likeminded and the willing to attend a closed-door session as soon as possible so that all the details of what and how to give feedback can be safely shared. Keep a record of the attendance. This is useful for future mobilization.
- 9.** This Guide will be updated from time to time. Please send your input to the LoveSingapore office. We encourage each church to appoint a Contact Person whose job is to collate feedback, reports or queries and coordinate or liaise with the LoveSingapore office on all related matters.
- 10.** Finally, be extremely prayerful. Seek the Lord together. Ask for greater compassion (Matthew 9:35-36), singleness of heart and action (Jeremiah 32:39), listening ears and an instructed tongue (Isaiah 50:4).

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WHAT TO DO

A: Here is a quick and easy first step for Facebook users:

1. Post a status update on your own page with this simple statement: “I support 377A”.
2. “Like” any pro-377A comments you may come across on your News Feed. This simple action makes a difference.
3. On Law Minister Mr K. Shanmugam’s Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/k.shanmugam.page>): Look for his post dated 4th January 2013 at 11pm. Click “Comment” and state your support for 377A. A simple one-liner is sufficient: “I support 377A” or “377A: Don’t Repeal!” or “Keep 377A”.

B: Here’s another way you can immediately act on your convictions:

1. Write a simple note in support of 377A to any one of the following:

- (a) PM Lee Hsien Loong (through the Prime Minister’s Office)
- (b) DPM Teo Chee Hean, head of the National Population and Talent Division. The Family institution falls under this division.
- (c) Cabinet Members or your MP
- (d) Feedback Unit REACH: www.reach.gov.sg/feedback.aspx

Email Addresses are on Page 7 of this Guide.

- 2.** Pay your MP a visit at the “Meet the People” session to personally express your concerns. Ask him or her to bring the issue up with his fellow MPs or with the Minister in charge of the issue or whoever is best placed to address your concern.

WHAT TO SAY

Below are 12 samples to give you an idea of what you can say when you write to the Minister or to the Feedback unit (REACH). Review each sample carefully. Do not use them verbatim. It is very important that you express your concerns in your own words and writing style. Most importantly, be civil and succinct.

Dear So-and-So (eg: Minister for Law, Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Social and Family Development, Minister for Education, etc)

- 1.** I'm writing to state my support for 377A. It is a good law and a right law for Singapore. Don't change it.
- 2.** We are writing as concerned parents. Do we realise that if we repeal 377A, Singapore will become a sexually permissive society? Is that the kind of Singapore we are proud of and want for our children? No way! Please do not tamper with 377A.
- 3.** I am young and single. I am writing because I shudder at the way society is going today. Do I even want to get married, have children, and then put them at risk growing up in an immoral culture that legalises alternative sex? It will be extremely difficult to feel at Home in Singapore. I say NO to repealing 377A.
- 4.** I have homosexual friends. I do not discriminate against them. I care about them. But I do not support their alternative lifestyles. I have noticed the pattern in other countries: repealing laws such as 377A has led to the legalising of same-sex marriage. I do not support same-sex marriage. Change 377A and down goes our core values, down goes the Family, down goes Singapore!
- 5.** I wish to register my point of view that gay and lesbian behaviour is unnatural. Same sex marriage is wrong. It must not become the norm in Singapore. It bothers me that we would even give a court hearing to people who challenge 377A. Please protect Singapore. Please leave 377A alone.
- 6.** 377A must be our moral standard. We are Singapore. We don't want to copy the West. Change does not necessarily equate to progress. Morally, we are becoming lax. We must not push our nation any further down this slippery slope of immorality.
- 7.** I am a teacher. Repealing 377A means that one day our children in all our schools will be taught that homosexuality is the accepted norm. MOE says we must emphasize values and build character. By granting a court hearing for the

repeal of 377A, we are effectively undermining our own national efforts to build character. I am very disappointed. Educators must make a stand to uphold 377A. It's about "moulding the future of our nation."

8. What is Family? One man as Father and one woman as Mother in a marriage relationship and the children they bring into this world from their union. That is the Singapore I was raised in. I've not known anything else. Why repeal 377A? It is sure to destroy the Family, this most basic building block of society. Any change to this core national value is suicidal. We must preserve 377A at all cost.

9. The voice of the LGBT is growing louder. If they succeed in repealing 377A, this will lead to a loss of religious freedom as seen in other countries. Out goes religious harmony, something so unique to Singapore. It's crazy. We build with one hand and destroy with the other. Do the right thing, 377A must stay!

10. As parents and responsible citizens of Singapore, we are very disturbed by recent reports of sexual acts posted on the internet, teachers having sex with their students, sexual acts performed in public areas, etc. We worry about this growing trend of sexual liberalism. And now, some are seeking to repeal 377A. This will only result in greater sexual liberalism and the erosion of cherished family values. Please DO NOT allow 377A to be repealed!

11. We are heartened by recent government efforts to promote family formation. We hear such assuring words: "Family values must be the starting point, and I hope the young people here will agree with me that they want to have their own families, because they enjoy growing up in a loving environment, that they also want to carry on and bring the love to their own children and the future generations." (Ms Grace Fu, Minister in PMO at an outdoor dialogue with residents in Yew Tee. Source: Singapore News, 4 November 2012). However, we watch with dismay the concerted attempts by certain groups to repeal 377A. Any change to 377A will undermine the Family, the foundation and future of this nation. DO NOT CHANGE 377A please!

12. The Government has made considerable efforts over the last decade to reinforce the Family as an institution in Singapore. There was even the Public Education Committee chaired by Mrs Yu-Foo Yee Shoon to study and make recommendations towards this end. So we are totally baffled why 377A is even allowed to be challenged in court. If 377A is repealed, the Family as an institution in Singapore will eventually collapse. We will no longer recognise the Singapore that we and our founding fathers have worked so hard to build. We must resoundly reject the repeal of 377A.

WHAT ELSE

A: You may want to begin your brief note by referring to one of the following current news:

1. Law Minister's meeting with Sayoni, a lesbian group. Read more about this in Law Minister's Facebook page. (<https://www.facebook.com/k.shanmugam.page>)

2. Channel News Asia Online: "Singaporeans becoming more tolerant of gays, lesbians: NTU study"

<http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/singaporelocalnews/view/1246880/1/.html>

3. Upcoming court hearing on 377A (Jan 25th and Feb 14th).

<http://www.singapolitics.sg/news/state-contest-new-challenge-anti-gay-law#.UPE5lgA-hiA.mailto>

B: You may want to close by asking specific questions that require a response. Ask what they are going to do about the issue. Express hope that they will do what is right for the good of Singapore and for the good of the coming generations. Be gentle, polite and sincere.

DO's and DON'Ts

1. Don't use similar templates and standard scripts. Our sample texts are meant to give you an idea of what you can say. So, remember: **it is very important that you express your concerns in your own words.**

2. Don't write long-winded complaints. Keep your letter short and succinct.

3. Don't use church or religious rankings or titles. Write as a concerned citizen, a parent, a teacher, a student, a doctor, a homemaker, etc.

4. Don't use the church email address. Use your personal one instead.

5. Don't procrastinate. Write when the issue or event is still current or soon to take place (eg: mention the Law Minister's dialogue with the lesbian group, or mention the recent article on the NTU study, or the upcoming court hearing on 377A).

6. Don't presume you know it all. If you are meeting your MP or if you are invited for dialogue, ask your Pastor for further guidance and/or resources to prepare yourself well.

7. Don't forward emails as this will leave traces of the contact chain and the thread of conversation from previous writers. Always write a fresh email after extracting the relevant contents from previous emails.

SOME EMAIL ADDRESSES

Online Source: Singapore Government Directory

1. Prime Minister

Mr LEE Hsien Loong

lee_hsien_loong@pmo.gov.sg

2. Deputy Prime Minister and
Coordinating Minister for National
Security; Minister for Home Affairs

Mr TEO Chee Hean

teo_chee_hean@mha.gov.sg

3. Minister, Prime Minister's Office

Mr LIM Swee Say

lim_swee_say@pmo.gov.sg

4. Minister for Communications
and Information

Dr YAACOB Ibrahim

yaacob_ibrahim@mci.gov.sg

5. Minister for Defence

Dr NG Eng Hen

Ng_Eng_Hen@mindef.gov.sg

6. Minister for Foreign Affairs
and Minister for Law

Mr K Shanmugam

k_shanmugam@mlaw.gov.sg

7. Minister for Health

Mr GAN Kim Yong

gan_kim_yong@moh.gov.sg

8. Minister for Education

Mr HENG Swee Keat

heng_swee_keat@moe.gov.sg

9. Minister, Prime Minister's
Office; Second Minister for
the Environment and Water
Resources; Second Minister for
Foreign Affairs

Ms Grace FU

grace_fu@pmo.gov.sg

10. Acting Minister for Social
and Family Development;
Senior Minister of State,
Ministry of Defence

Mr CHAN Chun Sing

chunsing@msf.gov.sg

11. Acting Minister for Manpower
and Senior Minister of State,
Ministry of National Development

Mr TAN Chuan-Jin

tanchuanjin@mom.gov.sg

12. Acting Minister for Culture,
Community and Youth; Senior
Minister of State, Ministry of
Communications and Information

Mr Lawrence WONG

lawrence_wong@mccy.gov.sg