

Liberty Ridge Farm, LLC

29 Bevis Rd, Schaghticoke, NY 12154 o Tel.: 518.664.1515 o www.LibertyFarmNY.com

November 2, 2012

Via Fascimile and Regular Mail

Victor P. DeAmelia, Regional Director
NYS Division of Human Rights
PO Box 2049
Empire State Plaza
Agency Building 1, 2nd Floor
Albany, New York 12220

Re: McCarthy and Erwin
v. Liberty Ridge Farm LLC and Gifford

Dear Mr. DeAmelia:

Please accept this as our initial response without the benefit of legal representation. We ask to be permitted to amend and supplement our response when we are able to secure representation, and we renew our request for an extension of time to respond through November 26, 2012.

First, we dispute that we have discriminated against anyone, including on the basis of sexual orientation, on this or on any other occasion. Homosexuals and heterosexuals alike visit our farm on many occasions and have never been turned away. We also deny that we would have offered or denied anyone the use of our facility on the basis of an initial telephone call. Use of our facility is only offered after a meeting at the farm to discuss the arrangements.

In principal, though, we do object to the performance of a wedding ceremony between two women on our premises which, by necessity, forces us as the owners and operators of our business to participate in a ritual that is completely contrary to our sincerely held religious beliefs. My husband and I are committed Christians who firmly believe that God has designed marriage to be between one man and one woman only.

Moreover, we try to be good spiritual role models to our employees, some of whom are family members. Remember, this farm is not only our family business, but it is our home as well. Our family lives on the two floors above the banquet facility on the first floor.

Therefore, we submit there has been no discrimination based on *status* (i.e. sexual orientation); rather, the question is whether we should be compelled to participate against our will in *conduct* (i.e. gay marriage) that we strongly feel violates our sincerely held religious beliefs.

We again ask that you permit us to supplement this response when we are able to obtain legal representation. If you feel pressured to make a finding before then, we submit that the appropriate conclusion is one of no probable cause to believe that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation exists.

Respectfully submitted,

LIBERTY RIDGE FARM, LLC

By: _____
Cynthia Gifford

By: _____
Cynthia Gifford

By: _____
Robert Gifford