

## Senator D. Scott Dibble



## Minnesota Senate

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Dear Friends,

I'm very sorry I cannot be with you this evening. Thank you to the hosts for your hospitality and generosity. And thank you to every one of you for your presence and your leadership.

I do want to take this opportunity to convey a simple and powerful message to everyone gathered tonight, and to ask that you carry this message to your friends, colleagues and families.

Barack Obama recently made use of Martin Luther King's quote, "The moral arc of the universe is long, but it bends towards justice." He went on to say that this is not a prophesy, but rather a challenge.

History does not write itself, change does not occur spontaneously.

The kind of change we all hope to bring about is hard and takes a long time. At its foundation is change in the hearts and minds of regular people. Each of us individually has the most important role in making that happen: coming out, living honestly, talking about our lives. Collectively we also play a role, conceptualizing what it means to even be a community –building social capital and social networks, and establishing institutions and traditions that we share.

Also key to change are all of the tasks and activities involved in influencing the large systems that permeate our lives, our culture, our society, our political climate and our government. Extremely complex and varied, those actions involve a lot of people, a lot of expertise and a lot of money. It also requires untold quantities of persistence, diligence and coordination. No one person, no one organization can solely take that challenge on. There is much to be done, plenty to go around for all.

Absolutely essential to our shared dream of change for the better, for justice and fairness for our community and our families, are the things that OutFront Minnesota does, every single day, day in and day out. OutFront is a critical part of the infrastructure that needs to be in place if that moral arc is going to be shortened, or if it going to bend towards justice at all.

Some might think that my role as a legislator is fairly straightforward – introduce a bill, present it through the committee process, bring it up on the floor for a vote, send it to the Governor for signature. Along the way have a few conversations with my colleagues and ask some regular people to show up and testify. Voila, justice prevails!

As the sophisticated people in this room well know, my role actually comes somewhere near the end of a very long, very complicated and iterative chain of events. Before we're ever ready for

the prime time at the Capitol, squadrons of regular people have been asked to join the cause, other levels of government have made important policy shifts, private interests and businesses have made changes to their internal policies, the media has been engaged, your mom and dad have decided its pretty cool to have a GLBT son or daughter. Every sector of Minnesota life has been touched, organized, affected in some way – education, legal, social services, business, faith community, media, government, political parties, and on. OutFront plays an important convenor, leadership, and implementation role in every aspect of this complex stew.

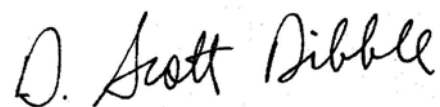
- ✓ A news story breaks – good or bad ... My first phone call is invariably to OutFront.
- ✓ The time has come to really dig in and come up with the best policy language for a bill I'm drafting – OutFront provides indispensable technical support.
- ✓ Every single legislator needs to hear from 20 or more of their own constituents about how important it is that they support or oppose a measure in front of the body – OutFront has done the groundwork to mobilize those phone calls.
- ✓ 5,000 people show up at the Capitol to really demonstrate to Minnesota and its elected representatives who we are and what we expect of our government – OutFront makes that happen.
- ✓ Election season is upon us, GLBT people need to be registered to vote, know who to vote for, volunteer in campaigns and make their issues known to candidates – OutFront is part of a large progressive coalition making those things happen.
- ✓ A business is vexed by homophobia in the workplace – they turn to OutFront for guidance on changes to their policies and practices.
- ✓ Someone is wondering how to come out to their parents, or how to get the wheels of change rolling at their church – OutFront is positioned to help.
- ✓ A group of GLBT community members have identified a problem that requires the sustained attention of a new organization – GLBT families, GLBT philanthropy, GLBT youth, GLBT professional associations, a GLBT business network...OutFront is the one organization that can provide moral, technical, and financial support to help ensure a successful launch.

I'm just scratching the surface of the things that OutFront does with us, for us and by our side.

We are poised for dramatic change in the next few years. Our community is ready, our state is ready, our whole country is ready. Now more than ever we must ensure that one of the most important institutions that will help us bring about that change, OutFront Minnesota, continues to be strong.

I am an enduring friend and fan of OutFront Minnesota. I hope you are, or will be, too...and hope you will help tell this story to those you know.

Yours in peace and justice,



Scott Dibble