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FAIRFAX, Va. -- Fairfax County, one of the wealthiest counties in the nation and one of the most liberal in the Washington area, has rejected proposals to include gays in its new "human rights" ordinance.

The ordinance, first of its kind in Virginia, was passed by the county Board of Supervisors July 29. It sets up a human rights commission to enforce a ban on discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, ancestry, national origin or marital status.

However, members of a citizens' committee which drew up the proposal said a proposal to include a ban on discrimination because of sexual orientation was omitted. One member said members considered it "political dynamite -- an explosive issue," and rejected it because the ordinance "contains enough controversial matter already."

James Scott, a member of the Board of Supervisors and chairman of the ad hoc citizens' committee, said a sexual orientation clause was omitted because "we didn't have enough of a clear idea about the problems in the county in this area. We ought to have a pretty good idea what the problems are in Fairfax before we move ahead."

Scott said that after the commission starts business, it can suggest amendments to the ordinance. "Anybody who wants to can go before the commission and raise a subject such as sexual orientation," he said.

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Frank Kameny, head of the Mattachine Society of Washington, said that if he had learned of the proposed ordinance earlier, he would have "gotten involved in the drafting and formulation of the ordinance." For now, he said, he has "decided at least for the time being to accept Mr. Scott's suggestion and wait."

Several witnesses ~~were~~ at the board of supervisors' hearing on the ordinance did urge that sexual orientation be included. The only g gay witness was Eva Freund, representing the National Task Force on Sexuality and Lesbianism of the National ^g Organization for Women. Freund, who ~~xxxx~~ works as a manpower planner for the county government, said she realized inclusion of such a provision "would serve to increase the controversial aspect of the proposed ordinance. However, I would remind the supervisors that the inclusion of ~~r~~ race was very controversial in the early 1960s and the inclusion of sex was very controversial until congressional passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, state ratification of which was endorsed by this board not too long ago."

Also supporting inclusion of the sexual orientation provision were Augustus Johnson, representing the Northern Virginia Chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, and Randy Hill, from the Housing Opportunities Council of Metropolitan Washington.

Fairfax County, with a population of more than half a million, is the second wealthiest county in the nation in terms of ^{average} per capita income. Its sprawling area, just west of Washington, D.C., ~~includes~~ houses the estates of many wealthy federal officials and business executives, including the famed Hickory Hills estate of the Kennedy ~~fax~~ clan. All but one of its supervisors are Democrats. The human rights ordinance passed by a vote of 7 to 2.