

Freedom to Marry E-Update
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1) A Note from Evan Wolfson

For the second time in two years, under fierce pressure from right-wing groups hostile to gay people and opposed to the separation of church and state, some politicians are again trying to drum up support for a proposed anti-gay amendment that would cement discrimination into the Constitution. These politicians fail to realize that they will never be anti-gay enough to satisfy the anti-gay industry. These same extremists are now attacking Bush, arguably the most right-wing president in history, for not being far-right enough.

Read the rest of Evan's Note regarding the current national discussion about the so-called "Federal Marriage Amendment" on our website.

You can also download Stand Up for Our Constitution, Freedom to Marry's primer on the importance of protecting our nation's precious charter of freedom.

-- Evan Wolfson

Follow developments in the movement for marriage equality on our website (www.freedomtomarry.org), and in future issues of Freedom to Marry's bi-monthly E-Update.

LINKS:

- * The Constitution protects us all: Say no to discriminatory amendments - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=4358>
- * Stand Up for Our Constitution - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/images/pdfs/Constitution.pdf>

2) Georgia's discriminatory amendment declared unconstitutional

A judge struck down Georgia's anti-gay constitutional amendment passed in the 2004 wave of attacks that are part of the right-wing's ongoing campaign state by state. The court noted that the sweeping amendment would have barred marriage and all other family protections for Georgia's gay citizens, and said this stampede to discriminate violated the "single subject" rule requiring that an amendment address only one matter, to assure fair and informed consideration by voters.

Fulton County Superior Court Judge Constance C. Russell ruled: "[T]he test of law is not its popularity. Procedural safeguards such as the single subject rule rarely enjoy popular support. But, ultimately it is those safeguards that preserve our liberties, because they ensure that the actions of government are constrained by the

rule of law."

Read more about this case and the full text of the ruling from Freedom to Marry's partner organization, Georgia Equality.

LINKS:

* Georgia Equality - <http://georgiaequality.org/>

* The text of the ruling - http://georgiaequality.org/cms/component/option,com_docman/Itemid,126/task,view_category/catid,83/order,dmdate_published/ascdesc,DESC/

3) National Gay & Lesbian Task Force and Freedom to Marry denounce Howard Dean's misrepresentations of the Democrats' position on marriage equality

In an appearance on Christian Broadcasting Network News, Democratic Party chair Howard Dean mischaracterized the 2004 Democratic platform, claiming it declared that "marriage is between a man and a woman." In fact, the forward-looking platform actually states, "We support full inclusion of gay and lesbian families in the life of our nation and seek equal responsibility, benefits, and protections for these families," while several state parties have also explicitly endorsed ending discrimination in marriage.

Dean's misrepresentation prompted the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force to return a \$5,000 donation from the Democratic National Committee. "We need for Governor Dean to demonstrate real leadership on our issues," executive director Matt Foreman said in an interview, "not to equivocate depending on the audience."

Read Dean's latest explanation and apology in the Advocate interview.

LINKS:

* National Gay & Lesbian Task Force - <http://www.thetaskforce.org>

* Dean's Advocate interview - http://advocate.com/exclusive_detail.asp?id=31090

GET ENGAGED: Freedom to Marry has two jobs available

Our beloved Office Manager Noran Camp recently agreed to take a position of Counsel to the Committee on Standards and Ethics of the New York City Council. Shine on, little star! We're happy and so proud of him, and hope our new Administration and Development Associate is as fabulous as he is.

We are also interviewing applicants for the newly expanded Executive Assistant position, as Pedro Julio Serrano takes on more responsibilities with Voices of Equality and the Communication Department.

These exciting positions are based in our New York City office. Read the full job descriptions on our website.

Speaking the Language of Marriage

DO -- say that the federal anti-gay amendment would prevent states and future generations from making their own decisions about ending discrimination in marriage. The Constitution should not be used to discriminate.

DON'T -- expect every person to be able to understand your concerns about discrimination in marriage immediately. Be prepared and open for conversation, and explain why marriage matters, how the denial of marriage harms families and society. Make it personal, and connect the dots. Your making the ask, and your speaking from the heart, are our greatest strengths as we give fair-minded people the information and time they need to rise to fairness.

QUOTE:

"At first, I was opposed to gay marriage. Then I found out it wasn't mandatory."

– Jon Stewart, The Daily Show

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST:

Most visited pages last week:

- * Celebrating APA voices - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=4334>
- * Wedrock - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3623>
- * Why Marriage Matters - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/node.asp?id=3470>

Lambda Legal, National Black Justice Coalition, Asian Equality, National Latina/o Coalition for Justice, and Freedom to Marry have teamed up to spearhead a campaign featuring a diverse array of people of color depicting the wide-ranging support marriage equality has across the country. To view the banner ad and mini poster, visit Lambda Legal.

GET ENGAGED: Write to friends and family and help them understand why marriage matters to you

There are many ways you can get involved by helping win and defend marriage equality nationwide.

