

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

Last week I flew to New Orleans to address the American Psychology Association's annual convention. My speech was entitled, "No Marriage Without Engagement: How Diverse Voices and Non-Gay Allies Help Build Support for Ending Discrimination," and I told them I had three main messages: Thank you for adding your voices and expertise on behalf of our families and freedom to marry. Don't get discouraged at the ups and downs that are inevitable features of the struggle for justice. Redouble your work of giving the reachable middle the information they need about same-sex couples and our kids and why marriage matters, enough times, over time, as they push past their discomfort and think anew.

Like other experts in health and child welfare, the APA has been a strong supporter of marriage equality, summing up decades of scholarship and experience in statements such as, "Prohibiting civil marriage for same-sex couples is discriminatory and unfairly denies such couples, their children and other members of their families the legal, financial and social advantages of civil marriage."

The clear evidence that ending marriage discrimination is good for couples, kids, and communities can be found in a recent authoritative statement by the nation's kids' doctors at the American Academy of Pediatrics [HERE](#).

And an example of how such allies are speaking up and making their voices heard can be found in the Amicus Curiae Brief that the American Psychological Association filed before the Washington Supreme Court in *Anderson v King County* [HERE](#).

All of us need to reach out to opinion-leaders, professionals, and other non-gay allies and ask them to explain clearly why marriage matters – and why America is stronger when all families are supported and valued.

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

LINKS:

- \* American Psychological Association - <http://www.apa.org/>
- \* American Academy of Pediatrics - <http://www.aap.org/>
- \* The Effects of Marriage, Civil Union, and Domestic Partnership Laws on the Health and Well-being of Children - <http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/full/118/1/349>

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\* Amicus Curiae Brief by the American Psychological Association -  
<http://marriage.law.cua.edu/Law/states/Washington%20State/Amicus%20Curiae%20Brief%20of%20American%20Psychological%20Association.pdf>

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2) Engagement in the states: The work to win the freedom to marry continues across the country

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The coordinated work of gay and non-gay supporters of equal marriage rights once again struck down an attempted anti-gay measure in the Illinois legislature. Illinois is just the latest example of how our work is engaging communities to block these anti-gay ballot measures before they have a chance to do more harm to our families. This year we blocked more measures than we are facing on the ballots in November. These are the unsung victories that are needed even as we move forward affirmatively.

LINK:

\* Equality Illinois - <http://www.eqil.org/>

\* Anti-gay measure dropped from IL bill -  
<http://www.upi.com/NewsTrack/VIEW.php?StoryID=20060812-075310-7819r>

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3) Freedom to Marry welcomes a new Voice of Equality

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SEIU Executive Vice President Mary Kay Henry has signed on as a Voice of Equality with Freedom to Marry.

Mary Kay Henry is an active champion of health care reform, immigration reform, and gay and lesbian rights, and a founding member of Service Employees International Union's gay and lesbian Lavender Caucus. She and her partner, Paula Macchello, have been together for almost 20 years.

"Imagine what could be different if the labor movement and the LGBT movement worked together in new and creative ways. Imagine that, in your state and community, when you go to the town council or state legislature to fight an anti-gay measure, you arrive with a lavender army that includes lots of purple – the purple caps and T-shirts of SEIU activists in your community," she said.

"And imagine that, when you read in the newspaper about the struggle of a group of local janitors or child-care workers to win the right to unite with SEIU for a voice on the job, you and your fellow activists go to their rallies to support them... and they are then able to support their families and work on the job with dignity... Together, we can create change. Real, progressive change that's good for all working families."

LINKS:

\* Voices of Equality - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/voe.asp>

\* Mary Kay Henry - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=4684>

\* SEIU - <http://www.seiu.org/>

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4) No Turning Back: The 2006 Pride at Work Convention  
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The Pride at Work Convention has prominent progressive leaders providing skills-building workshops and informative plenary sessions. Occurring September 7-10 in San Diego, the pre-conferences will provide intensive training and education on specific topics such as the labor-related ramifications of marriage inequality, building pride at work, and transgender discrimination in the workplace. Further, the No Turning Back 2006 agenda features programmed free time and networking sessions.

For further information or to register for this event, please visit the Pride at Work website.

LINK:

- \* Pride at Work - <http://prideatwork.org/page.php?id=5>
- \* No Turning Back 2006 - <http://prideatwork.org/page.php?id=292>

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5) 50x50x50=Fifty Friends Forward campaign  
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Atticus Circle has been working hard to find supportive people in the equality movement and recently launched their 50x50x50=Fifty Friends Forward campaign. The objective is to find at least fifty new supporters in all fifty states in the next fifty days (now 40 days). This membership drive will culminate into the launch of a new yearlong campaign they are working on with Soulforce called "Seven Straight Days for Equal Rights".

Seven Straight Days for Equal Rights will take place from September 16-22, 2007 with a wave of straight people standing up across America for LGBT people. It will travel from west to east across the country, ending in Washington DC for a huge celebration on September 22, 2007 at the Jefferson Memorial.

LINK:

- \* Atticus Circle - <http://www.atticuscircle.org/>
- \* Soulforce - <http://www.soulforce.org/>

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QUOTE:  
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"To deny the children of same-sex partners, as a class, the security of a legally recognized relationship with their second parent serves no legitimate state

interest."

- The Vermont Supreme court re: B. L. V. B, 1993

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OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST:

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Most visited pages last week:

- Marriage Matters Ad - <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/images/pdfs/marriagead0706.pdf>
- WA Court's Recent Decision - <http://www.courts.wa.gov/opinions/?fa=opinions.opindisp&docid=759341DI1>
- The Task Force's API Survey - [http://www.thetaskforce.org/community/api\\_survey.cfm](http://www.thetaskforce.org/community/api_survey.cfm)

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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.

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

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

To read a sample letter you can write and send to family and friends, visit: <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=3171&view=page=280>

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SPEECH: Winning Marriage Equality: The Road Ahead

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Wolfson delivers the Cal Anderson Memorial Lecture at The Evergreen State College in Olympia, WA, and calls for all of us to engage neighbors and fellow citizens in the personal and informational conversations they deserve – and trust that from that engagement will come marriage.

To read this speech, visit: <http://www.freedomtomarry.org/document.asp?id=3886>

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Why Marriage Matters: America, Equality, and Gay People's Right to Marry, by Evan Wolfson

