

Marriage Updates

The following updates and resources are based on information provided by Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) and received by press time.

Wisconsin: There was a hearing at the capitol on the state's anti-gay constitutional amendment. The Assembly Judiciary Committee has indicated it will review the constitutional amendment first and then turn to other bills. Two representatives introduced a marriage equality bill that would render all licensing documents and related laws gender neutral.

Georgia: Senate Resolution 595, a proposed amendment to the state constitution that would make it illegal for same sex couples to marry, was passed by the Senate Rules Committee and sent to the full Senate for approval.

Idaho: A move to constitutionally ban gay marriages passed the Idaho House 53-17 after just 20 minutes of debate, clearing the first of three main hurdles needed to change the constitution. The amendment goes now to the Senate.

South Dakota: A measure that would ban civil unions and domestic partnerships in the state was rejected Monday by a House committee after lawmakers said the bill might have had unintended consequences such as invalidating contracts or interfering with companies' benefit packages.

Oklahoma: Conservative state legislators are pushing for change to their constitution to make marriage exclusively between a man and a woman, as well as outlaw any legal protections for same-sex couples.

New Hampshire: The legislature is considering a bill to define marriage as involving one man and one woman.

Note: When reporting on this issue, journalists and commentators often fail to clarify the distinction between civil unions and marriage, particularly the fact that civil unions cannot activate the more than 1,049 federal laws and regulations affecting married couples. When you hear such commentators, write to the news source and object.

Resources

Current Map detailing which states have anti-marriage equality laws.
<http://www.nglhf.org/issues/maps.cfm?issueID=10>

Lambda Legal's Marriage Project has published "Talking About the Freedom to Marry: Why Same-sex Couples Should Have Equality in Marriage," which discusses in depth the arguments in favor of extending marriage rights to same-sex couples. For more information, visit:
<http://www.lambdalegal.org/cgi-bin/iowa/documents/record?record=47>

GLAD also has an extended discussion of the evolution of marriage available at <http://www.glad.org/Publications/CivilRightProject/OP3-historyofchange.shtml>

For access to a list of 1,049 rights enjoyed by married opposite-sex couples but denied same-sex couples, visit http://www.marriageequality.org/facts.php?page=1049_federal. A link there downloads a .pdf document containing the report of the General Accounting Office.

GLAD also has a discussion of "Protections, Benefits & Responsibilities of Marriage," available at <http://www.glad.org/Publications/CivilRightProject/OP2-protectionsbenefits.shtml>

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