



JUN 17, 2014
CAM 14-0779

Broward Log Cabin Republican Club

P.O. Box 1821, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33302

May 25 2014

The Honorable John P. Seiler, Mayor
City of Fort Lauderdale
Fort Lauderdale City Hall
100 North Andrews Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301

ALL
COMMISSIONERS
RECEIVED

RE: LCR Conservative Egalitarians Stand for Marriage Equality and Fairness

Dear Jack:

The members and friends of the Broward Log Cabin Republican Club call upon your good office and that of the other elected commissioners to stand for fairness coupled with compassion for the equitable treatment of all minorities by asking that each Commissioner, as a proud American and believer in the essence and spirit of the U.S. Constitution, support a Fort Lauderdale City resolve on Marriage Equality.

Our Chapter, which was founded in 1981 and Chartered by the Republican Party of State of Florida in 1999, along with those of us who have worked with other community organizations in support of the Broward County Human Rights Ordinance and other civic, fiscal, and social issues look to you for a supportive position on Marriage Equality.

The members and friends of Log Cabin Republicans here in the City of Ft. Lauderdale, in Broward County, and throughout the state and country are fair minded Egalitarians who strongly believe in our inclusive Constitution which guarantees Life Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness for all Americans. That's the same spirit our Founding Fathers held within their pioneering vision. Yes, they, President Abraham Lincoln, President Harry Truman, and other outstanding, fair minded, and compassionate Americans understood what occurs when such a vision is bastardized, sadly skewed, and subsequently utilized by those who would spread the seeds of intolerance throughout the land by misrepresentation.

Don't let those who would utilize a mean-spirited and skewed vision of marriage equality as tool and means to scapegoat inclusion through exclusion thereby overshadowing what the American dream stands for here and throughout the world. *Support Marriage Equality!*

Sincerely,
Mayor Sandra Steen, LCR President

Thanks for all you do for the City and for BFW

Ft. Lauderdale City Commissioners, Broward Com. Chip LaMarca
Tom Truex-BREC Chairman, Dan Hemminger, LCR Vice President,
Bill James, LCR Treasurer and Jan Cassberg, LCR Secretary,
Jack Majeske, LCR Past Pres., Andy Eddy, LCR Board – Audit Committee Chair
Tim Ross, Dolphin Democrats,
Marshall Belmaine, -American Veterans for Equal Rights,
Carol Benowitz - P-Flag, Nadine Smith-Eq.FL,
Dignity, Etz Chaim, Integrity, MCC Sunshine Cathedral, etc.

2014 MAY 28 PM 2:12

CITY COMMISSION

Awareness through Education – Responsibility through Involvement

Thursday, April 24, 2014 8:13 AM
Chuck Muth – Muth's Truths Blog

NEVADA GOP TOOK RIGHT STEP ON GAY MARRIAGE

Bravo to delegates of the 2014 Nevada Republican Party convention for having both the courage and foresight to remove the gay marriage issue from the party's official platform. I suspect Ronald Reagan would have approved.

In a 2013 New York Times profile, the president's daughter, Patti Davis, reminded everyone of her father's opposition to a California ballot measure that would have banned gay teachers from working in public schools, and recalled a very telling incident from her youth...

"Once when she and her father were watching a Rock Hudson movie, Ms. Davis said, she remarked that the actor 'looked weird' kissing his female co-star. She said her father explained that Mr. Hudson 'would rather be kissing a man,' and conveyed, without using the words homosexual or gay, the idea that 'some men are born wanting to love another man.'"

This was a simple acknowledgement of reality, just as Nevada Republicans at this year's convention acknowledged the political reality that, like it or not, for better or worse, legal gay marriages in this country are inevitable.

The fact is the general public's views on and acceptance of gay marriage have changed dramatically over the last 10 years, especially as more and more younger citizens have entered the voting population.

Legal gay marriages are also inevitable because of the equal protection clause in our Constitution and because of the precedent established by the United States Supreme Court in the 1967 *Loving v. Virginia* landmark decision in which the court declared, in striking down that state's ban on interracial marriages, that marriage was a fundamental right.

One of my favorite Reagan quotes is this: "Government's first duty is to protect the people, not run their lives."

It is not the government's proper role to determine who can marry who. If anything, this controversy shows the danger of an ever-expanding "nanny state" government. In fact, the real problem here isn't letting gays into the institution of marriage, but the decision made many, many years ago to let the government into the institution of marriage.

Again quoting Reagan, "Government is not a solution to our problem, government is the problem."

This is not to say, of course, that all Republicans are now supporters of gay marriage. They surely are not. What the Nevada GOP's decision says is that limited-government Republicans of good conscience can be on opposite sides of this issue and still be good Republicans. I mean, it's not like they're now supporting tax hikes!

This was surely neither an easy decision, nor a popular one with social conservatives. But it was the right decision, as history will bear out over time. And as the first state GOP party in the nation to make such a bold move, Nevada Republicans can be proud for making a decision that other states will now certainly follow.

Informational excerpts regarding "Marriage Equality"

Same-sex couples should have access to the same benefits enjoyed by heterosexual married couples.

Many benefits are only available to married couples, such as hospital visitation during an illness, taxation and inheritance rights, access to family health coverage, and protection in the event of the relationship ending. [6] An Oct. 2, 2009 analysis by the *New York Times* estimates that a same-sex couple denied marriage benefits will incur an additional \$41,196 to \$467,562 in expenses over their lifetime compared to a married heterosexual couple.

Legalizing gay marriage will not harm heterosexual marriages or "family values," and society will continue to function successfully. A study published on Apr. 13, 2009 in *Social Science Quarterly* found that "[l]aws permitting same-sex marriage or civil unions have no adverse effect on marriage, divorce, and abortion rates, [or] the percent of children born out of wedlock..." [48] The Executive Board of the American Anthropological Association found that more than a century of research has shown "no support whatsoever for the view that either civilization or viable social orders depend upon marriage as an exclusively heterosexual institution. Rather, anthropological research supports the conclusion that a vast array of family types, including families built upon same-sex partnerships, can contribute to stable and humane societies."

Same-sex marriage is a civil right. The 1967 Supreme Court case *Loving v. Virginia* confirmed that marriage is "one of the basic civil rights of man," [60] and same-sex marriages should receive the same protections given to interracial marriages by that ruling. The NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People), on May 19, 2012, named same-sex marriage as "one of the key civil rights struggles of our time." [61]

(CNN) -- In a major milestone for gay rights, the U.S. government on Monday expanded recognition of same-sex marriages in federal legal matters, including bankruptcies, prison visits and survivor benefits.

"It is the (Justice Department's) policy to recognize lawful same-sex marriages as broadly as possible, to ensure equal treatment for all members of society regardless of sexual orientation," Attorney General Eric Holder said in a memo to all employees.

Get the Facts! Because, Marriage Matters...

FACT = something that actually exists, reality, truth.

Marriage equality is an issue that often sparks intense emotions, both in those who are working for equality, and in those who oppose it. The institution of marriage is also surrounded by a great deal of assumption and mythology. It behooves us all to **Get the Facts** before discussing marriage equality. We hope that reading through **Get the Facts** will prove useful and answer your questions. If you have additional questions, would like to correct something we have posted, or can suggest additional content that you think is important, please contact webcontent@marriageequality.org.

Marriage offers many legal benefits and responsibilities that protect families. It also provides societal status and emotional benefits. Here are just a fraction of the reasons why marriage matters to couples who choose/desire to marry.

The Practical

Marriage offers 1,138 Federal benefits and responsibilities, not including hundreds more offered by every state.

- In times of crisis, spouses have hospital visitation rights and can make medical decisions in event of illness or disability of their spouse.
- Employers offer spouses sick leave, bereavement leave, access to health insurance and pension
- The law provides certain automatic rights to a person's spouse regardless of whether or not a will exists.
- Married couples in elderly care facilities are generally not separated unless one spouse's health dictates hospitalization or special care.
- The dissolution of a marriage requires a determination of property distribution, award of child custody and support and spousal support. Absent divorce, there is no uniform system for sorting out the ending of a relationship.

The Financial

Financial issues are complex and challenging, no matter the couple. When home ownership, kids and other assets are a part of the equation, planning for the present and especially the future is even more critical for greater security.

- **Married couples are permitted to give an unlimited amount of gifts to each other without being taxed.**
- The law presumes that a married couple with both names on the title to their home owns the property as "tenants by the entirety."
- A married couple, by statute, has creditor protection of their marital home.
- Many married people are entitled to financial benefits relating to their spouses, such as disability, pension and social security benefits.
- **With marriage, a couple has the right to be treated as an economic unit and to file joint tax returns (and pay the marriage penalty), and obtain joint health, home and auto insurance policies.**
- When a spouse dies, there is no need to prove ownership of every item in the household for taxable purposes.

Protecting Children

- A child who grows up with married parents benefits from the fact that his or her parents' relationship is recognized by law and receives legal protections.
- Spouses are generally entitled to joint child custody and visitation upon divorce (and bear an obligation to pay child support).
- The mark of a strong family and healthy children is having parents who are nurturing, caring, and loving. Parents should be judged on their ability to parent, not by their age, race, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity.

A study published in the *Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics*, entitled *The Effects of Marriage, Civil Union, and Domestic Partnership Laws on the Health and Well-being of Children* found that:

- Same-gender couples live in 99.3% of all US counties.
- Same-gender couples are raising children in at least 96% of all US counties.
- Nearly one quarter of all same-gender couples are raising children.
- Nationwide, 34.3% of lesbian couples are raising children, and 22.3% of gay male couples are raising children (compared with 45.6% of married heterosexual and 43.1% of unmarried heterosexual couples raising children).
- Vermont has the largest aggregation of same gender-couples (~1% of all households) followed by California, Washington, Massachusetts, and Oregon.

According to **this 2006 study** Census 2000 and related demographic research make it clear that parenting by same-gender couples is an established and growing part of the diverse structure of families in the United States. Public policies that aim to promote family stability and security typically are established without consideration for same-gender parents and their children, and they place these families at a disadvantage, as they do heterosexual unmarried parents, single parents, and extended-family caregivers. Public policy designed to promote the family as the basic building block of society has at its core the protection of children health and well-being. Children's well being relies in large part on a complex blend of their own legal rights and the rights derived, under law, from their parents. Children of same-gender parents often experience economic, legal, and familial insecurity as a result of the absence of legal recognition of their bonds to their nonbiological parents. Current public-policy trends, with notable exceptions, favor limiting or prohibiting the availability of civil marriage and limiting rights and protections to same-gender couples.

The Healthy Advantage

Studies show that people who are married tend to live longer and lead healthier lives.

- For adults, a stable, happy marriage is the best protector against illness and premature death. Decades of research have clearly established these links. (Burman & Margolin, 1992; Dawson, 1991; Verbrugge, 1979).
- Studies on marriages have found that married people live longer, have higher incomes and wealth, engage less in risk behaviors, eat healthier, and have fewer psychological problems than unmarried people. (Waite, Linda J. **Why Marriage Matters** Strengthening Marriage Roundtable. Washington, DC, June 1997)
- Research shows that unmarried couples have lower levels of happiness and well-being than married couples. (Popenoe, David and Dafoe Whitehead, Barbara, USA Today, July, 2000)
- A recent study shows that denying same-sex couples the right to marry has a negative impact on their mental health - I Do, But I can't: The impact of marriage denial on the mental health of sexual citizenship of Lesbians and Gay Me in the United States (Herdt, G. & Kertzner, R. 2006).