

Christians Urged to Support Marriage Amendment

Christian leaders are still urging support for laws banning gay marriage despite the Federal Marriage Amendment's failure to pass in the Senate.

The American Family Association (AFA) is encouraging supporters to visit and sign a petition calling for an amendment prohibiting same-sex marriage. The AFA hopes to present 3 million signatures to the House of Representatives before it votes on the issue in September.

Other efforts are under way to get gay marriage banned on the local level. So far the November ballots in nine states will include referendums calling for amendments prohibiting gay marriage.

On July 23, conservative Christian leaders welcomed the passage of Indiana Republican Rep. John N. Hostettler's Marriage Protection Act in the House. The bill limits the jurisdiction of federal courts over questions arising from the Defense of Marriage Act, which was signed into law by former President Bill Clinton in 1996. The act protects states from having to recognize gay marriages performed in other states.

But limiting the scope of federal judges is a secondary strategy in the battle to defend traditional marriage, which some say could be a 10-year fight. Several conservative Christian leaders say amending the Constitution is the most certain way to bar gay marriage.

Bishop Paul S. Morton plans to submit 8,000 petitions collected during his Full Gospel Baptist Church Fellowship convention to the Congressional Black Caucus. He is calling for its opposition to same-sex marriage and noted that his group would “remember those who do not support family values.”

Meanwhile, pastor Ken Hutcherson of Antioch Bible Church in Seattle hopes to convene thousands of Christians in Washington, D.C., Oct. 15 for a Mayday for Marriage Rally (). Similarly, Bishop John Giminez of Rock City Church in Baltimore plans to host an America for Jesus rally Oct. 22 on the National Mall (). The event is aimed at getting Christians to fast and pray for the nation’s future.

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