

Marriage At Risk in D.C.

✖ If Lady Liberty could cry, she would be weeping now. Among her many burdens would be the abuse of democracy and our constitution's first principles on many fronts. Her most recent wound might be that D.C. residents are being shut out of the decision-making process. This week, the D.C. City Council introduced a same-sex marriage bill that would allow homosexual marriages to be performed in the nation's capital. The 10 co-sponsors of the bill announced via interviews and media statements that they would not allow the people of the District of Columbia to vote on this landmark decision.

With an issue as controversial as same-sex marriage, one would think that the voice of the people should be heard. The Rev. Henry Gaston, president of the Missionary Baptist Conference of Washington, D.C. made the following statement after the council meeting: "In the name of advancing one group's civil rights, the city council is abridging my community's right to vote. Anyone familiar with the historic civil rights movement knows that 'the right to vote' not 'the right to marry' was the gold standard of civil rights privileges."

In the last year, all of the advances of same-sex marriage have been made through stealth lobbying efforts. A very small group of people, armed with large campaign contributions from all over the U.S., have targeted key regions and key elections. These lobbying groups approach mainstream candidates and establish long-term relationships. One of the master funders of these efforts is Tim Gill. Gill is a software entrepreneur turned political activist. His brainchild, the Gill Foundation is "dedicated to advancing equality by supporting nonprofit organizations that serve lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and allied individuals, as well as people with HIV/AIDS."

Tim Gill, George Soros and other anti-family activists operate by funneling money to their henchmen or ideologically allied activists in D.C. These political action committees and civic organizations have lobbied council members for at least 5 years. They have given money to support the election campaigns of virtually all of the seated council members and the mayor. This is how a group representing just 2 to 4 percent of D.C. residents can have such influence.

The lesson pro-family activists should learn from this D.C. City Council drama is that we can change a state or nation's policies on important issues by simply playing local politics with a vengeance.

This week, we have experienced a setback, but we are encouraged by the fact that the California Marriage Amendment battle was won after gay marriage had been previously legalized. In D.C. we still have options. Specifically, we have the prospects of developing a citywide marriage initiative, which can establish the definition of marriage as being between one man and one woman. Our paperwork for the marriage initiative was filed on Sept. 1 and will be reviewed on Oct. 26.

Why should you care about the battle for marriage in D.C.?

First, redefining marriage means destroying traditional marriage as we know it. Second, if D.C. falls it will be the first decision for gay marriage below the Mason Dixon line. Our opponents will continue to boast that the tide is changing in their favor and that the Bible belt states will fall next. Finally, a D.C. defeat will give strength of argument to gay marriage advocates in Maryland and Virginia. Maryland has been under pressure to allow same-sex marriage for the last five years as well.

What happens in our capital will set a new tone in the culture wars of the nation. Let me be a little more specific. On Sept. 30, 2008, the same-sex marriage decision was pre-announced to approximately 150 gay marriage activists. These were the most engaged individuals in this process to redefine marriage.

Because this bill was initiated on Oct. 6, there will be a huge gay rights lobbying event in D.C. Gay marriage supporters expect 20,000 – 40,000 people to attend.

There is just one problem with their dream about marriage – it will become a nightmare for thousands of D.C. children and nuclear families in the generations to come.

It is time for the people of faith to unite across racial, cultural and ideological lines to address this specific problem. In the D.C. area we have over 1,200 churches that have decided to work collaboratively to protect marriage. These churches are under black, white, Hispanic and Asian leadership, but they all have a heart for the family. I want to invite you to get involved in reclaiming the finest aspects of our American culture – faith and family.

It is not enough to defend marriage's definition. We must strengthen marriage through personal marital interventions. Churches, counselors and volunteer ministers must promote marriage wherever they minister. Last week I heard Roland Martin, CNN commentator and syndicated columnist, talk about his personal commitment to making his friends accountable to their marriages and families. He was addressing the National Summit on Marriage, Parenting, and Families chaired by famed football coach, Tony Dungy, and Chick-Fil-A founder, S. Truett Cathy. Like Martin we should all make a covenant with both God and our neighbors to promote healthy families. What about you? Are you willing to stand for marriage?

Those of us in D.C. need you to do three things:

1. Call your Congressmen and ask them to weigh in on D.C.
2. Send this article to five friends.
3. Consider sending a contribution to .