

Same-Sex Marriage Creeping Into Colorado

Colorado lawmakers approved a bill on Tuesday to legalize **same-sex civil unions**, and the U.S. state's Democratic governor, who has indicated his support, was expected to sign the measure into law.

The Colorado House Democrats said the measure, which passed by a 39-26 vote in the state House of Representatives, would provide benefits, protections and responsibilities to gay couples similar to those granted heterosexual pairs.

The measure had already been approved by the state Senate.

"This bill is about three simple things: it's about love, it's about family and it's about equality under the law," Colorado House Speaker Mark Ferrandino, an openly gay Democrat and a sponsor of the bill, told fellow lawmakers.

Nine U.S. states and the District of Columbia allow **same-sex marriage**. Voters in Washington state, Maine and Maryland last November became the first in the nation to approve same-sex marriage at the ballot box.

Eight other states allow civil unions, according to gay rights group the Human Rights Campaign.

On Monday, lawmakers in the House rejected a number of Republican-sponsored amendments to the bill.

Last year, a civil unions bill failed to get a vote by the entire Colorado House of Representatives, which was then under the control of Republicans with a one-vote majority. The governor pushed at the time for a special legislative session to consider the bill in a failed effort to win its passage.

In his 2012 executive order calling for that session,

Democratic Governor John Hickenlooper said the bill was needed so that couples, regardless of their sexual orientation, could “take care of each other and their families”.

A spokeswoman for Hickenlooper could not be reached for comment on Tuesday.

SOUND OFF: Do you think passing this civil unions bill is an open door to gay marriage in the state? How do we stop this tidal wave of immorality?

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