

Hispanics Leader Opposes Obama's Marriage Directive

When Sam Rodriguez speaks, evangelical Hispanics listen—and they aren't the only ones.

As president of the National Hispanic Association of Evangelicals—America's largest Hispanic Christian organization—Rodriguez has plenty of political firepower, yet he isn't known for politicizing the Gospel.

In the face of President Obama's recent Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) directive, however, Rodriguez is speaking out loudly. Passed by Congress in 1996, DOMA defines marriage as a legal union between one man and one woman for purposes of all federal laws, and provides that states need not recognize a marriage from another state if it is between persons of the same sex.

In late February, the U.S. Department of Justice and Obama are indicating they will no longer defend a key component of the federal Defense of Marriage Act. Rodriguez has partnered with the Freedom Federation, an evangelical faith-based organization, to urge Congress to oppose Obama's DOMA directive. The groups are supporting the plight of Republican House Speaker John Boehner.

Boehner has promised to convene a meeting of the Bipartisan Legal Advisory Group to initiate action by the House to defend DOMA, which was enacted by a bipartisan vote in Congress and signed by President Bill Clinton.

"It is regrettable that the Obama Administration has opened this divisive issue at a time when Americans want their leaders to focus on jobs and the challenges facing our economy," Boehner says. "The constitutionality of this law should be determined by the courts—not by the president

unilaterally—and this action by the House will ensure the matter is addressed in a manner consistent with our Constitution.”

Rodriguez has made his position clear: he whole heartedly disagrees with Obama’s DOMA directive. “Traditional marriage is the number one antidote against the social ills—drugs, teen pregnancy and high school drop out rate—that plague races of color,” he says. “We applaud Speaker John Boehner’s action to build a legal case defending DOMA.”

Rodriguez is hardly alone. Matthew Staver, dean and professor of Law at Liberty University and director of Liberty Center for Law And Policy, agrees that traditional marriage is the cornerstone of America.

“Redefining marriage is not in the best interest of the family unit,” Staver says. “Abandoning the Defense of Marriage Act is tantamount to declaring war on the family. The more than 40 million people represented by the organizations that comprise the Freedom Federation call on Congress to act now to defend natural marriage between one man and one woman.”