

Uruguay May Legalize Same-Sex Marriage

Uruguay's congress is considering a **gay marriage** law that would give **same-sex couples** all the same rights and responsibilities of heterosexual married couples.

The country already has a civil unions law and has stood out in Latin America lately for **legalizing abortion** and planning to sell government-grown marijuana to any citizen who wants it.

The proposed "marriage equality" law would change Uruguay's nearly-century-old civil code and give married gays and lesbians all the rights and responsibilities of heterosexual married couples, including the possibility of adopting children.

It was drafted by **gay rights activists** in the so-called "Black Sheep Collective" and now has the support of lawmakers in the ruling Broad Front coalition, which decided Wednesday to debate the measure next week in the House of Deputies' constitutional commission.

"Today's society is much broader than the heterosexual, and the civil code should reflect this: a marriage institution that applies equally to all," Federico Grana, a member of the collective, told The Associated Press on Wednesday. "This goes well beyond homosexuality—it's a law that gives all the same rights and responsibilities."

Uruguay's Roman Catholic Church is opposed.

Bishop Jaime Fuentes, who presides over family issues for the church's governing episcopal conference, told the AP Wednesday that "marriage equality" is a discriminatory misnomer.

“It seems logical that two people of the same sex who care for each other and want to share their lives together can have some sort of civil acknowledgement, but it can’t be the same as what governs marriage,” Fuentes said. “Giving this kind of union the same obligations and rights as marriage would represent serious discrimination against a married man and woman.”

The bishop argued that “children have a right to be raised by a father and mother, by birth or adoption.”

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