

The Soulforce Petition Opposing the Federal Marriage Amendment

As people of faith we are committed to working for justice and equality for all.

We stand firmly against amending the U.S. Constitution for the express purpose of excluding or discriminating against any group of individuals on the basis of a single shared characteristic, whether that characteristic is race, religion, nationality, ability, sex, gender, familial status, or sexual orientation.

We therefore oppose the Federal Marriage Amendment because it seeks to misuse the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights to discriminate against millions of American couples, families, and children and deny them equal rights and protections under the law.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ e mail _____

Affiliation/Title _____ (for identification purposes only)

WE ENCOURAGE YOU TO SIGN THE PETITION ONLINE
www.soulforce.org/petition.shtml

By signing the petition, you agree that we can post your name on the Soulforce Website in support of the urgent Soulforce campaign to stop the F.M.A.

Additionally, your name will be sent to your congressperson, and your email will be added to our alert list to keep you informed about the F.M.A.

Please copy the Petition and distribute it. Sign one copy and send it to Soulforce, P.O. Box 3195, Lynchburg, VA. 24503.

Soulforce is an interfaith movement committed to ending spiritual violence perpetuated by religious policies and teachings against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people.

Equal Civil Marriage Rights

* Currently, marriage has two distinct components: civil marriage and the religious ritual of marriage. Mixed-gender couples can have a civil marriage without the religious ceremony/ritual. Couples can have a religious ceremony/ritual, without a civil marriage. Some couples can opt for both. However, to receive the legal protections of marriage, a couple must have a civil marriage, which is the only marriage that can be addressed by courts or legislatures.

* The 1000+ rights and legal protections of civil marriage that are given to mixed-gender couples and families should also be extended to couples and families who are headed by same-gender couples. These include the rights of survivorship, inheritance, insurance, joint income tax filing, and a myriad of rights that many mixed-gender couples take for granted.

* Denying equal rights and protections to same-gender couples harms and threatens children who may depend on a family headed by a same-gender couple for insurance benefits, social security, and/or emergency hospital care.

* All religions are free to decide for themselves which civil marriages they honor within their tradition, and which ones they won't. For example, the Catholic Church does not recognize marriages of divorcees. Orthodox Jews do not recognize marriages of mixed religions (Jew and non-Jew). On the other hand, Unitarians do honor religious marriages of same-gender couples. Reformed Jews also marry same-gender couples. Many religions believe homosexuality is morally equivalent to heterosexuality, and same-gender couples are just as entitled to civil marriage protections as mixed-gender couples.

* Although each religion can define the religious ritual of marriage within its own institution, the government is obligated to treat all people equally under the law. This constitutional amendment would violate that principle.

* This proposed amendment not only seeks to discriminate against same-gender couples and families, it would nullify existing domestic partnership and civil union laws, usurping state and local bills that grant equal rights to gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) people.

For more information see www.soulforce.org

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