

Keep Discrimination Out Of Our State Constitution

The Marriage Discrimination Amendment: House Bill 361, Senate Bill 272

Bill Purpose

The so-called "Defense of Marriage Act" would amend the North Carolina constitution not only to deny equal marriage rights—which are already denied lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender North Carolinians—but also to prohibit any recognition of civil unions, domestic partnerships, or similar relationships in the state. The language of the bill is so broad it could prevent private companies from extending domestic partner benefits to their employees.

Why It Matters

Same-sex marriage is already not recognized by the State of North Carolina. This bill would put to a popular vote an amendment to the state constitution that would deny rights to North Carolinians. It is redundant, unnecessary, and serves only to reinforce inequality for LGBT citizens.

- North Carolina is in a budget crisis and faces rising unemployment. This bill is a political wedge issue that distracts from the real issues facing our state.
- Most North Carolinians support some protections for same-sex couples, even if they don't support marriage equality. This amendment would prevent the state and local governments from extending even the most basic forms of protections to committed same-sex couples.
- The state constitution is for protecting people's rights—not denying them. The civil rights of a minority should never be put to a vote of the people.
- Putting the Marriage Discrimination Amendment to a popular vote would create strife throughout the state, much like Prop 8 in California. This is a time when our leaders should be encouraging North Carolinians to work together to solve problems—not a time to create problems and encourage division.