
TALKING POINTS:

What You Need to Know about the Marriage Protection Amendment (MPA)

Marriage is Foundational

- Marriage between men and women is found in nearly every human society as far back as historians can trace and is the foundation of a healthy, stable society. Children are created through the union of their father and mother, and thousands of studies have shown that the best environment for raising children—physically, psychologically, and emotionally—is with their married father and mother.
- Marriage has been universally understood as the publicly recognized union of a man and a woman that is set apart from all other relationships. It is privileged through law because it creates the best and safest environment for raising children.

The Benefits of Marriage — Why it Must be Protected

- The many benefits of marriage include: increased family wealth; less poverty, especially for women; better health and longer life expectancies, especially for men; lower rates of depression, especially for women; less risk of domestic violence, especially for women; and better relationships with children, especially for fathers.
- More children growing up with their own married mothers and fathers results in fewer societal ills, and therefore less reliance on local, state, and federal governments for assistance, such as welfare, child support, and other social services, and the associated and economic costs that place a demand on the state.

The MPA is about Preservation, NOT Discrimination.

- Opponents have described the Marriage Protection Amendment as a “ban on gay ‘marriage.’” Since current state law already defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman, the MPA does not “ban” anything that is currently legal in North Carolina. A marriage amendment would simply preserve in the State Constitution the definition of marriage that has existed throughout history, making a positive statement about what constitutes a marriage in North Carolina.
- The Marriage Protection Amendment is about preserving the universal institution that for thousands of years and across all civilizations has brought men and women together to create the safest environment for raising children.

The Success of MPAs in Other States

- Thirty states, including every southern state except North Carolina, have responded to attacks on marriage by protecting the definition of marriage through state constitutional amendments. The people of North Carolina deserve the opportunity to vote to protect marriage.
- Whenever the question of redefining marriage is taken out of the hands of politicians and presented directly to the American people, it is soundly rejected. In fact, in every state where the definition of marriage has been on the ballot, the measure has been approved by voters by an average passage rate of 67.3 percent.

Why a Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) Statute isn't Enough

- The federal DOMA law, which defines marriage for the purposes of federal law as only between a man and a woman, and protects states from having to recognize same-sex “marriages” that are performed in states where the practice is legal, is being challenged in the courts. These challenges pose a significant threat to state DOMA laws, including North Carolina’s.
- The only way to protect North Carolina’s marriage laws from redefinition by the courts or the legislature is to preserve the definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman through an amendment to the State Constitution.

- The redefinition of marriage has been achieved only through the courts or by legislative action—never by a vote of the people.

Widespread Support and Polling Information

- The coalition behind the Marriage Protection Amendment consists of a wide range of North Carolinians from a variety of religious, political, and racial backgrounds.
- A 2009 survey of 5,009 registered voters in the state—which was commissioned by the North Carolina Family Policy Council—found that 73 percent would be “likely” to vote in favor of a MPA. The poll also found that 71 percent of those polled would be “more likely” to vote for a candidate who supports the MPA.
- According to a December 2010 poll by the John W. Pope Civitas Institute, nearly two-thirds of North Carolinians responded in favor when asked whether they “support or oppose an amendment to the North Carolina Constitution defining marriage as between one man and one woman.”

Answers to Common Questions:

Why do we need a constitutional amendment? Isn't DOMA enough?

A: Escalating legal challenges to the federal DOMA pose a significant threat to state DOMA laws, including North Carolina’s. Preserving the definition of marriage as the union between one man and one woman through an amendment to the State Constitution is the only way to protect North Carolina’s marriage laws from redefinition by the courts or the legislature. Putting the definition of marriage in the Constitution removes the ability of the courts or the legislature to redefine this all-important institution.

What's the harm from Same-Sex “Marriage” (SSM)? How can a homosexual couple hurt your marriage?

A: SSM harms each and every North Carolinian, first and foremost by changing the historic definition of marriage from a public institution that is based on the needs of children and society to one that is based on the desires of adults. SSM also poses a significant threat to religious freedom, will influence what children are taught in public schools about sexuality, relationships and marriage, and would result in religious individuals or organizations being stigmatized, persecuted, or denied the right to offer services. For example, Catholic adoption agencies have been forced to end their state-funded adoption and foster care programs in some same-sex “marriage” states.

Why do you want to interfere with love? Isn't that what marriage is all about?

A: Love is a great thing, but marriage is not only about love. By its very nature, marriage is an exclusive institution. We don’t allow siblings, children, or more than two individuals to marry because of the potential harm to both individuals and society. Clearly, marriage is not only about love; it’s about binding together a man and a woman in a complementary union that creates the best environment for having and raising children. It is a special familial relationship that has been recognized by the government because of the many benefits that it brings to society.

What about benefits? Don't same-sex couples and their kids need the benefits and protections of marriage?

A: The real issue isn’t benefits; it is marriage. Local groups, private companies, and governments can decide benefits for themselves. The real issue is about redefining marriage, our most basic societal institution, and the best family environment for raising healthy children.

Are you saying that same-sex couples cannot be good parents?

A: Two men might each be a good father, but neither can be a mother. Two women might individually be good mothers, but neither one can be a father to a child. The ideal for children has always been and always will be the unique, irreplaceable love of their own married mother and father. Thousands of studies involving children from broken (single parent) homes have shown how much little girls and little boys need the opposite-sex parent to thrive. Two parents of the same-sex cannot provide the opposite-sex parent that every child needs and deserves.