

**RELIGIOUS ENDORSEMENT OF THE FREEDOM TO MARRY**

“An Open Letter to Religious Leaders on Marriage Equality” was developed at a colloquium of theologians sponsored by the Religious Institute, an ecumenical, interfaith organization dedicated to advocating for sexual health, education, and justice in faith communities and society, and funded by Freedom to Marry.

Endorsements are only accepted from ordained clergy, professional religious educators, theologians, and staff of religious institutions. Not clergy? You can still help! Sign our Marriage Resolution on the other side of this card and send it in today!

**Yes, please list me as endorsing An Open Letter to Religious Leaders on Marriage Equality.\*** (Please fill out all fields.)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title:  
Rabbi\_\_ Rev. \_\_ Rev. Dr. \_\_ Rt. Rev. \_\_ Father\_\_ Sister\_\_ Dr. \_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Degree: \_\_\_\_\_ Denomination: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

**\* By agreeing to endorse the statement, I understand that I am agreeing to my name being used with this statement in public releases, press materials, brochures, advertisements, and other public formats.**

**PLEASE DETACH AT FOLD  
AND FAX OR MAIL IT IN  
TODAY!**

Freedom to Marry  
116 West 23rd Street, Suite 500  
New York, NY 10011  
Tel: 212-851-8418  
Fax: 646-375-2069



“America needs to know that many faith leaders and theologians from diverse religious traditions strongly believe that all people have a God-given right to lead lives which fully express love, mutuality and commitment—including the right to marry.”

-Reverend Debra W. Haffner  
Director of the Religious Institute

You can download the complete “Open Letter” at  
[www.religioustheology.org](http://www.religioustheology.org)

*The beginning of the Declaration of Independence says, All men are created equal. I take those words literally. There is no ‘unless you’re gay.’*

-Ron Reagan

*As Mankind becomes more liberal, they will be more apt to allow that all those who conduct themselves as worthy members of the community are equally entitled to the protections of civil government. I hope ever to see America among the foremost nations of justice and liberality.*

-George Washington  
(1790)

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stand up

for our  
Constitution

## What's all this talk about amending the Constitution?

By EVAN WOLFSON  
Freedom to Marry

The Constitution of the United States is a treasured safeguard for every person's basic freedom and for our nation's unity. Generations of Americans have fought for and respected this charter of freedom. Since the adoption of the Bill of Rights in 1791, the Constitution has only

been amended seventeen times — never to take away rights or equality from any group of Americans.

Now, under fierce pressure from right-wing groups hostile to gay people and opposed to the separation of church and state, some politicians are flirting with a proposed anti-gay amendment that would cement discrimination into the Constitution. The current version circulating in Congress, and not repudiated by the White House, reads: "Marriage in the United States shall consist only of the union of a man and a woman. Neither this Constitution, nor the constitution of any State shall be construed to require that marriage or the legal inci-

dents thereof be conferred upon any union other than the union of a man and a woman."

This sweeping anti-gay amendment is intended to do two things:

1. intrude the federal government into the regulation of marriage to prevent all states and all future generations from providing marriage equality to committed same-sex couples, no matter what, and
2. prevent state and local governments, as well as the federal government and in many cases private employers, from providing any other measure of protection ("the legal incidents of marriage) to gay people and their families as well as other unmarried Americans and their children.

There is nothing conservative about this effort to write anti-gay discrimination into the Constitution. For that reason, many conservative voices have spoken out against this political abuse of the Constitution, including Vice-President Dick Cheney, Senators Chuck Hagel and Jon Ensign, columnist George Will, and even former Congressman Bob Barr (author of the 1996 federal law discriminating against gay people's marriages).

Our nation's founders wisely made it very difficult to amend the Constitution. Amendments require approval of two-thirds of the Senate and House and three-quarters of the state legislatures. But right-wing groups are mobilizing millions of dollars in this election-year to stampede politicians around the country and intimidate judges. They recklessly attack courts for following the law and upholding constitutional protections for all Americans.



Our opponents know that amending the federal constitution is very difficult. Meanwhile they have embarked on a politically motivated campaign to lock discrimination into state constitutions, depriving people of the opportunity to change the law to treat families fairly

over time. Because they fear they are losing the discussion about the cruelty and unfairness of marriage discrimination, and not trusting the next generation, they are trying to stampede voters into hasty decisions now. In many states, simply by gathering enough signatures to put equal rights up for a referendum vote, the constitution can be altered. Even when buyer's remorse ultimately sets in, undoing amendments to a state's constitution takes time.

Discrimination has no place in government, in marriage or in the Constitution. Politicians who play with fire near our nation's most precious document are the greatest threat to American families and values. All Americans, gay and non-gay, deserve respect and support for their families and basic freedoms. Government should not be putting obstacles in the path of people seeking to care for their loved ones. And candidates, presidential or otherwise, should be uniting the American people, not dividing us, at a time of challenge for freedom in the world.

### THE MARRIAGE RESOLUTION

Because marriage is a basic human right and an individual choice, RESOLVED, the State should not interfere with same-sex couples who choose to marry and share fully and equally in the rights, responsibilities and commitment of legal marriage.

**I/We endorse the marriage resolution. Please feel free to include me/us as a voice in educating the public:**

Signature\*: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

(please print legibly)

Title: Mr. \_\_\_ Ms. \_\_\_ Miss. \_\_\_ Dr. \_\_\_ Mrs. \_\_\_

Organization (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Apt/Suite: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

May we add your name and contact information to the Freedom to Marry mailing list? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

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