why

MARRIAGE FAIRNESS matters

Marriage is the ultimate expression of love and commitment. Married couples make a public vow of love and responsibility to each other.

Like everyone else, gay and lesbian New Yorkers want to express their love and protect their families through marriage. Two adults who make this private, personal choice should not be denied the opportunity to legally marry just because they are gay or lesbian.

It’s time that our lawmakers do what’s fair and extend marriage rights to all New Yorkers. Governor Cuomo has pledged to sign a marriage fairness bill into law. The State Assembly has passed a marriage bill three times and is poised to do it again.

It’s time for the State Senate to do the right thing for New York families and vote to extend the freedom to marry to gay and lesbian couples.

NYCLU
NEW YORK CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION
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MARRIAGE FAIRNESS WILL BOOST THE ECONOMY.

The New York City Comptroller’s Office estimates that legalizing same-sex marriage would add about $184 million to the state’s economy in the three years after marriage fairness legislation is enacted.

MOMENTUM IS ON OUR SIDE.

A MAJORITY OF NEW YORKERS SUPPORT MARRIAGE FAIRNESS.

FAIRNESS ISN’T ABOUT RELIGION.

The marriage bill implicates civil marriages only.

Clergy members will continue to choose which marriage ceremonies they will perform.

An April 2011 Siena College poll found 58 percent of New Yorkers support legalizing gay marriage. That’s a sea change since 2004, when 55 percent opposed marriage fairness.

Gay and lesbian New Yorkers serve in the military, keep our communities safe as firefighters and police officers, staff our hospitals, teach our children, pay taxes and raise families. Denying loving gay and lesbian couples the freedom to marry is simply unfair. State lawmakers must do what’s right and end this discrimination.

In February 2011, the Obama administration denounced the Defense of Marriage Act — the federal law that prohibits federal recognition of same-sex marriages — as “unnecessary and unfair,” discriminatory and unconstitutional.

New York’s unfair marriage law is just as cruel and discriminatory as federal law. Our state should follow the Obama administration’s lead and treat gay and lesbian couples fairly by allowing them the opportunity to marry.
IT’S TIME FOR OUR ELECTED OFFICIALS IN ALBANY TO STAND UP FOR ALL NEW YORK FAMILIES.

When New York State denies gay and lesbian New Yorkers the ability to marry their loved ones—and treats them like second-class citizens—it deprives them of the 1,324 rights and protections that accompany marriage, including:

- The right to inherit
- The right to be their partner’s next-of-kin during hospital visitation
- The right to automatic joint parental rights of children
- The protection of family court in domestic violence cases or child custody disputes
- The right to family medical leave to care for a partner’s dire illness or new children
- The right to share health and other insurance
- The right to inherit
- The protection of family court in domestic violence cases or child custody disputes

NEW YORK ALREADY RECOGNIZES OUT-OF-STATE MARRIAGES BETWEEN LESBIAN AND GAY NEW YORKERS.

Children of same-sex parents often suffer economic, legal and familial insecurity because their bond to their parents is not legally recognized. Every major children’s health and welfare organization, including the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Psychological Association and the Child Welfare League of America, supports the rights of lesbians and gay men to parent.

Thanks to the NYCLU’s landmark legal victory in Martinez v. County of Monroe, the state recognizes out-of-state marriages between lesbian and gay couples.

New Yorkers should not have to cross state lines to protect their families. New York’s leaders should join Connecticut, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, Iowa, and Washington D.C. and extend marriage rights to gay and lesbian couples.
GET INVOLVED

New Yorkers from across the state and political spectrum are uniting in support of fair marriage laws. Get involved in this movement for fairness and equality!

Log on to www.marriageny.com to learn about what’s happening in your region.

Send the NYCLU a handwritten letter with a picture of your family telling us why you believe that all New Yorkers deserve the freedom to marry, which we will forward to your senator.

Mail your letter to:
Marriage Fairness Campaign, NYCLU, 125 Broad Street, 19th floor, New York, NY 10004.

Contact your state senator and the Senate majority leader and tell them that all New Yorkers deserve the freedom to marry. Send a free fax with a few mouse clicks by visiting www.marriageny.com.

Contact your local NYCLU office to learn more about how to get involved.

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