

Comment Regarding Raised Bill H.B. 7395, "An Act Concerning Marriage Equality"

March 26, 2007

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee:

H.B. 7395 redefines marriage to include same-sex couples. This bill was made possible by last session's Civil Union's law, which gave "all the same benefits, protections, and responsibilities" of marriage to same-sex couples, but explicitly defined marriage as "the union of one man and one woman".

The most general argument in favor of H.B. 7395 is the observation that it makes no sense to assign the *attributes* of marriage to same-sex unions, but not the *name*. I agree -- with the additional observation that it makes no sense to assign the attributes of marriage to something that is not marriage. Thus, the Civil Unions law introduced a lingering inconsistency into Connecticut's general statutes, one that reflects the differences in opinion on what marriage is. H.B. 7395 would resolve the inconsistency in favor of same-sex marriage.

I ask you to oppose H.B. 7395. Marriage is a social institution that predates our society. The essential attributes of marriage do not change, regardless of what our laws may say about it. We redefine marriage at our own peril.

Despite its defects, Connecticut's Civil Unions law has spoken directly on the question of how marriage is to be defined. If the legislature wishes to reopen the question of what marriage is, it should pose the question to the citizens of Connecticut. I urge you to support a state referendum on the definition of marriage.

Regards,

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