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Testimony to The Judiciary Committee on
HB 5925 An Act Concerning Civil Unions
March 17, 2008
Public Hearing

The Connecticut Catholic Conference is opposed to House Bill 5925, An Act Concerning Civil Unions, especially section three which would recognize out-of-state same-sex marriages. Currently, the State of Connecticut has a clear public policy that only recognizes marriages between members of the opposite sex. This policy is clearly reflected in the existing civil union statutes adopted by this legislature. HB 5925 may well create a legal situation within our court system that would challenge that policy and this type of recognition may lead to a court decision that would force Connecticut to recognize same-sex marriage within its own borders. As you know, the Connecticut Supreme Court is currently considering the legality of same-sex marriage in our state and is expected to rule at any time on this issue. Should the Court rule in favor of same-sex marriage, then this piece of proposed legislation would not be necessary.

HB 5925 would change the existing policy in Connecticut by officially giving implied recognition to same-sex marriages in Connecticut. The State would recognize same-sex marriages in Massachusetts under this legislation and the question could then be raised, that since Connecticut recognizes same-sex marriages in other jurisdictions, should it not recognize them within its own borders, among its own residents. In 2005, the legislature clearly expressed what it felt should be the proper definition of marriage in this state, that is, a union between one man and one woman. Adoption of HB 5925 would begin to erode that definition and expose current state policy to an eventual judicial override.

The future of traditional marriage in Connecticut should not be impacted by legislation, such as HB 5925, that attempts to adjust state law in

assisting to make same-sex marriage in our state a reality. The Supreme Court is currently addressing this serious matter. If the legislature wishes to raise this issue, it should also do so in an open and direct manner, allowing the public to have the input that this important decision deserves.

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