



ACTION

3/6/09 Testimony of Peter Wolfgang, President of FIC Action, on S.B. 899

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Good afternoon Chairman Lawlor, Chairman McDonald and members of the committee. My name is Peter Wolfgang and I am the President of the Family Institute of Connecticut Action, an organization whose mission is “to encourage and strengthen the family as the foundation of society and to promote sound, ethical and moral values in our culture and government.” I am here today to ask you to amend S.B. 899, an act implementing the Supreme Court's invention of same-sex marriage.

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S.B. 899 goes beyond mere legislative housekeeping. Section 2 asserts that the rights granted to a marriage—presumably including a same-sex marriage—entered into this state may be recognized by another state if the parties travel to or reside in that state. This appears to be an attempt to export Connecticut's court imposed same-sex marriage regime on those states where voters exercised their right to protect marriage as between a man and a woman. It is bad enough that voters in our state did not have that same right. We should not be attempting to export the judicial imposition of same-sex marriage on those states which have a more vigorous culture of democratic accountability than our own. In fact, it is unlikely that the Connecticut General Assembly even has the power to do so. Section 2 of S.B. 899 should be removed.

Section 7 of this bill must be far stronger than the current language. The negative effect of same-sex marriage on religious liberty and rights of conscience involve far more than the question of whether clergy will be forced to perform same-sex weddings. Connecticut's justices of the peace are being told they no longer have the right to refuse perform same-sex ceremonies that they had under the civil union law passed by this legislature. That right must be restored. Catholic Charities in Boston was forced to end its adoption services because the state told them they must place some of those children in homes with same-sex couples, a violation of their beliefs. Section 7 must be amended to make certain that same-sex marriage does not lead to similar attacks on religious liberty in Connecticut.

Section 17 of this bill would repeal a state law protecting public policy on a wide range of moral issues. A repeal of this law could be read to mean that the State of Connecticut 1) **condones** homosexuality or bisexuality or any equivalent lifestyle, 2) **authorizes** the promotion of homosexuality or bisexuality in educational institutions or requires the teaching in educational institutions of homosexuality or bisexuality as an acceptable lifestyle, and 3) **authorizes or permits** the use of numerical goals or quotas, or other types of affirmative action programs, with respect to homosexuality or bisexuality in the administration or enforcement of non-discrimination laws. Section 17 should repeal only that part which conflicts with Kerrigan; the rest should remain.