

Catholic Rainbow Parents for Constitutional Integrity



The cofounders and coordinating committee of the Catholic Rainbow Parents are shown. Seated (l to r): **Chuck and Alice Rice, Mary Lynn and Mike Murphy, Darlene and Tom White**; middle row (l to r): **Gretchen Murr, Phyllis Nickels, Beverly Barrett, Bill and Deb LeMay, Mary Beckfeld, Ward Brennan**; and back row (l to r): **Tom Murr, Charlie Girsch, Ron Ohmann, Maria Girsch, Myrna Ohmann, Sue Kramp and Rich Kramp, Gladys and Milt Hill, and Bob and Sue McDonald**. (Not pictured are: **Mary and Marsh McDonough and Roger and Donna Urbanski**.)

As Minnesota citizens, people of faith, and Catholic parents of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) persons, we urge our elected representatives and the people of our state to protect the rights of our children and the integrity of our Constitution by rejecting the discriminatory, anti-gay “marriage amendment.”

The 14th Amendment to the US Constitution guarantees equal protection for all. We must ensure that this remains the guiding principle of our state Constitution. Otherwise it would deprive GLBT couples and their families equal access to the 1138 protections currently and automatically available to heterosexual couples – such as hospital visitation, inheritance rights, health care benefits, and child adoption rights.

The proposed “marriage amendment” would not only ban same-gender civil marriage but all “legal equivalents.” Accordingly, if passed, the amendment would make void all currently existing domestic partnership laws, rights, and protections (be they provided by the state or private businesses). This would have severe consequences to the health care, economic security, and probate concerns of many Minnesotan GLBT citizens and their families.

Such families are already here: the 600,000 same-gender couples counted by the 2000 US Census provides a conservative estimate of their actual number, while a conservative estimate of children under 19 being raised by gay or lesbian parents ranges from 1 to 9 million. The passage of the discriminatory “marriage amendment” will not make these families go away; it can only harm them.

As people of faith and parents of GLBT persons, we believe it is a moral imperative to resist any law that denies or limits the rights of our children or any minority group in our country. The proposed “marriage amendment” strikes a blow at the very heart of our democracy. It is unAmerican to the core.

If this amendment is passed we have much to lose as American citizens, as people of faith, and as parents of GLBT persons. Accordingly, we call upon our fellow Minnesotans to respect the integrity of GLBT people and the integrity of our Constitution by rejecting the proposed “marriage amendment.”