

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

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MITT ROMNEY
GOVERNOR

KERRY HEALEY
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June 2, 2006

Majority Leader Bill Frist
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator,

Next week, you will vote on a proposed amendment to the United States Constitution protecting the institution of marriage. As Governor of the state most directly affected by this amendment, I hope my perspectives will encourage you to vote "yes."

Americans are tolerant, generous, and kind people. We all oppose bigotry and disparagement, and we all wish to avoid hurtful disregard of the feelings of others. But the debate over same-sex marriage is not a debate over tolerance. It is a debate about the purpose of the institution of marriage.

Attaching the word marriage to the association of same-sex individuals mistakenly presumes that marriage is principally a matter of adult benefits and adult rights. In fact, marriage is principally about the nurturing and development of children. And the successful development of children is critical to the preservation and success of our nation.

Our society, like all known civilizations in recorded history, has favored the union of a man and a woman with the special designation and benefits of marriage. In this respect, it has elevated the relationship of a legally bound man and woman over other relationships. This recognizes that the ideal setting for nurturing and developing children is a home where there is a mother and a father.

In order to protect the institution of marriage, we must prevent it from being redefined by judges like those here in Massachusetts who think that marriage is an "evolving paradigm," and that the traditional definition is "rooted in persistent prejudices" and amounts to "invidious discrimination."

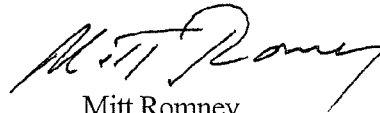
Although the full impact of same-sex marriage may not be measured for decades or generations, we are beginning to see the effects of the new legal logic in Massachusetts just two years into our state's social experiment. For instance, our birth certificate is being challenged: same-sex couples want the terms "Mother" and "Father" replaced with "Parent A" and "Parent B."

In our schools, children are being instructed that there is no difference between same-sex marriage and traditional marriage. Recently, parents of a second grader in one public school complained when they were not notified that their son's teacher would read a fairy tale about same-sex marriage to the class. In the story, a prince chooses to marry another prince, instead of a princess. The parents asked for the opportunity to opt their child out of hearing such stories. In response, the school superintendent insisted on "teaching children about the world they live in, and in Massachusetts same sex marriage is legal." Once a society establishes that it is legally indifferent between traditional marriage and same-sex marriage, how can one preserve any practice which favors the union of a man and a woman?

Some argue that our principles of federalism and local control require us to leave the issue of same sex marriage to the states—which means, as a practical matter, to state courts. Such an argument denies the realities of modern life and would create a chaotic patchwork of inconsistent laws throughout the country. Marriage is not just an activity or practice which is confined to the border of any one state. It is a status that is carried from state to state. Because of this, and because Americans conduct their financial and legal lives in a united country bound by interstate institutions, a national definition of marriage is necessary.

Your vote on this amendment should not be guided by a concern for adult rights. This matter goes to the development and well-being of children. I hope that you will make your vote heard on their behalf.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mitt Romney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mitt" and last name "Romney" clearly distinguishable.

Mitt Romney
Governor