



CATHOLICS FOR THE COMMON GOOD

A NEW CATHOLIC ACTION

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November 7, 2011

Oppose SB 598, DOMA Repeal Bill Stand with the Rights of Children

Members of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator,

Please vote "no" on SB 598. A vote in favor of this bill amounts to an attack on the internationally recognized human right for children to know and be cared for by their mothers and fathers. This right is expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and can be confirmed by the common desire of everyone for connection with the man and woman from whom they originated. I will explain.

It is a fundamental responsibility of government to protect and promote the recognition of human rights. However, by withdrawing federal government support for the reality of marriage that unites a man and a woman with each other and any children born from their union, the Senate would be making a statement that the government has no interest in the only institution that promotes that children be raised by their mothers and fathers.

In fact, if marriage is redefined to accommodate "equality" for same-sex couples, by definition, it becomes discriminatory to promote the imperative of marriage between a man and a woman as critical to the rights and well-being of their children and a well-functioning society.

Too many children are deprived of married mothers and fathers today. The human and economic consequences of fatherless homes are well documented by government studies: higher incidences of children living in poverty, abuse, neglect, delinquency, teen pregnancy, and school dropout rates. At a time when it is in the public interest for schools and public institutions to encourage young people to seek marriage before having children, powerful special interests are asking you to make that discriminatory by redefining marriage to solely protect the private interests of adults.

Some will argue that marriage should be redefined because an increasing number of same-sex couples are parenting today. Every child without exception has a unique and irreplaceable mother and father, and marriage is the only institution that promotes uniting each child with that mother and father within a natural family. Deprived of a mother or father or both, other people step in to parent as an act of charity. That has nothing to do with marriage. Furthermore, while there is a public interest in promoting adoption, there is none for promoting alternative families as role models. In reality, every alternative family has a child who has been deprived of knowing and being cared for by his or her mother or father or both.

The interests of gay rights groups in redefining marriage are well known, but the reasons for protecting marriage between a man and a woman actually have nothing to do with homosexuality or gay rights as demonstrated above. Consider once again the two alternative definitions of marriage that are now on the table:

- Implicit in marriage as a union between a man and a woman is the reality that it also unites them with any children born from their union. That is what marriage is; that is what it does. That is why it has been recognized as such by every culture, every state, and every religion. It is a reality that cannot be changed and is independent of belief in God.
- The alternative is for marriage to become merely the legal recognition of a committed relationship between two adults with associated benefits. This is how marriage must be redefined in order to accommodate same-sex couples. This would be a social construction based solely on private interests of adults rather than a human reality – the natural family and the rights of children. It would no longer have a public purpose related to children, families and the future of society.

We ask you to carefully consider the public interest of each of these definitions in a neutral way, without consideration of gay rights or perceived religious interests.

It becomes clear to everyone that in order to support SB 598, *one must actually oppose* marriage, the reality that unites a man and a woman with each other and any children born from their union. That was spelled out clearly in a reply brief the Obama Administration submitted in the *Smelt vs. U.S.* case.

“... the government does not contend that there are legitimate government interests in "creating a legal structure that promotes the raising of children by both of their biological parents ...”

If you support SB 598, is it really your intention to oppose the only institution that unites children with their mothers and fathers? How can any reasonable person defend that?

Again, supporting marriage is a responsibility directly related to the human right of every child without exception to know and be cared for, as far as possible, by his or her mother and father. Mothers and fathers and families of origin are part of the identity of every person, and that interest must be protected by civilized society.

We respectfully ask you to stand with the common interest of every child without exception by supporting laws and public institutions that uniquely encourage men and women to marry and then support them in their marriages and as mothers and fathers of any children they may have. Please vote “no” on SB 598.

For the Common Good,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bill May". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

William B. May
President, Catholics for the Common Good