



## Alaska's Marriage Amendment

In 1998, Alaska became the first state in the nation to pass a constitutional amendment that specifically defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman, thereby precluding other unions, such as polygamy or same-gender relationships, from being recognized or defined as "marriage" under state law. The amendment was approved by 68 percent of voters. Voters in 29 other states have approved similar amendments to their respective state constitutions.

In 2014, Senator Hollis French (D-Anchorage) introduced a resolution (SJR 30) that would repeal Alaska's marriage amendment. In addition, litigation has been filed in federal district court, *Hamby v. Parnell*, seeking to have Alaska's marriage amendment declared unconstitutional.

Alaska Family Council believes that marriage between a man and a woman is the fundamental building block of society and culture. Marriage between a man and a woman deserves its status as a privileged institution in public policy because of the unique benefits it confers on civilization.

Among these benefits for society is the fact that marriage between a man and a woman is the most optimal environment for the upbringing of children. Homosexual activists seek to redefine marriage for everyone, by transforming it into a "genderless" institution. Their stated goal is to make this gender-free construction of marriage the only legally recognized definition of marriage throughout the U.S. Once gender differences are discarded – as if they were meaningless for defining the substance of marriage – there will no longer be any rational basis under the law for limiting the marriage union to only two persons, as opposed to polygamous relationships of three or more persons. When marriage is redefined to mean *anything*, it will soon come to mean *nothing*.

Changing the definition of marriage will lead to a host of societal conflicts, as government authorities attempt to force public schools, public employees, private businesses, non-profit charities, and even individual citizens to comply with the new legal orthodoxy. These conflicts have already emerged in states that have permitted homosexual "marriage." In Washington state, the attorney general is suing a florist who declined to provide flowers for a homosexual wedding, because doing so would violate her religious beliefs about what marriage is. In Massachusetts, Catholic Charities of Boston, one of the oldest adoption agencies in the U.S., was forced to shut down its adoption service – because it would not comply with the state government's demand that it place children with homosexual "married" couples.