



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on May 9, 2012

N.C. Voters Overwhelmingly Pass Marriage Protection Amendment

Withstanding intense pressure from homosexual activist groups as well as the cajoling of an array of former and current government officials, voters in North Carolina overwhelmingly approved a state constitutional amendment defining marriage as only between a man and a woman — effectively prohibiting homosexual “marriage” in the state. With all precincts having reported in, it appeared that some 61 percent of voters had approved Tuesday’s [ballot initiative](#), which read in part:



“Marriage between one man and one woman is the only domestic legal union that shall be valid or recognized in this State.”

“Now, the people have spoken,” said Ron Baity, pastor of Winston-Salem’s Berean Baptist Church and a leader in the effort to get the amendment passed. “They have spoken clearly, they have spoken explicitly, that marriage in North Carolina is between one man and one woman.”

A total of 30 states now have marriage protection amendments written into their constitutions, with North Carolina being the last Southern state to do so. “Supporters of traditional marriage have won 32 of the last 32 votes on the issue of civil unions — an astounding 100 percent record,” noted the [Christian Post](#). “Only six states and the District of Columbia allow same-sex marriage and all but Iowa are located in the more liberal Northeastern states.”

Among the North Carolinians offering public support for the amendment was the Rev. Billy Graham, appearing in a full-page ad that amendment sponsors published in key newspapers. By contrast, President Obama predictably threw his support to homosexual groups, with his North Carolina spokesman, Cameron French, saying a few weeks before the vote that “while the President does not weigh in on every single ballot measure in every state, the record is clear that the President has long opposed divisive and discriminatory efforts to deny rights and benefits to same-sex couples.”

[Fox News](#) reported that former President Bill Clinton recorded a “robo-call” message in which he warned hundreds of thousands of North Carolinians that if the amendment passed it would negatively impact North Carolina’s “ability to keep good businesses, attract new jobs, and attract and keep talented entrepreneurs.” He added that passage of the measure could even “take away health insurance from children and could even take away domestic violence protections from women.” The ultimate impact, he said, would be “to hurt families and drive away jobs.”

The North Carolina Democratic Party released a statement following the vote, calling passage of the amendment a “setback,” but promising to continue to battle for special rights for homosexuals. “Tonight’s results are an unfortunate reminder that the fight for civil rights in our state is not yet over,” the statement read. “Writing discrimination into our Constitution is wrong. The State Constitution exists



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to protect the rights of our citizens — not to take them away. Despite this setback, North Carolina Democrats will continue to fight for all of our citizens.”

Meanwhile, pro-family leaders applauded the measure as a victory for the protection of families in North Carolina. “We applaud North Carolina voters for joining voters in 31 other states upholding the historic and natural definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman” Tony Perkins of the [Family Research Council](#) (FRC) said in a prepared statement. “At every opportunity, the American people have demonstrated a deep appreciation for the unique benefits that marriage between a man and a woman brings to families and society. They recognize that marriage is the only kind of union that results in natural procreation and keeps a mother and father together to raise the children produced by their union.”

Perkins said the victory in North Carolina demonstrated why President Obama has been reluctant to come down officially on the side of homosexual marriage. “This overwhelming support for marriage is clearly the reason President Obama and liberal congressional candidates across the country have not expressed open support for same-sex marriage,” he said. “They know that redefining marriage remains a losing position in mainstream American politics.”

Tami Fitzgerald of [Vote FOR Marriage NC](#), a group that helped shepherd the amendment to passage, commented on the victory: “I think we’ve built a huge coalition across North Carolina of people who believe in godly values. And I believe that speaks well for people in our state who have somewhat been a silent majority in the past. I think you can expect them to be very active in the future, especially when they see the impact of their grassroots efforts.”

The Associated Press quoted one pro-amendment voter, student Shane Colwell of Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, as explaining that the measure clarified the true definition of marriage. “I’m a born-again Christian, and I just believe the Bible is clear that marriage is for one man and one woman,” he said. “It doesn’t mean that anybody’s less equal than anybody else. I just think that marriage is one man and one woman.”

Another amendment supporter, Joe Easterling, also a Christian, told AP: “I know some people may argue that the Bible ... should not be applicable on such policy matters. But even looking at nature itself, procreation is impossible without a man and a woman. And because of those things, I think it is important that the state of North Carolina’s laws are compatible with the laws of nature, but, more importantly, with the laws of God.”

Observers of the run-up to the vote said that the amendment appeared destined to pass early on. “The pro side could have not spent a single dollar, and they would have still won by double digits,” Tom Jensen of Public Policy Polling in Raleigh told the *Charlotte Observer*.

For the many Christian in this Bible-belt state, the driving force behind the effort to pass the amendment was, indeed, faith. “This was an issue of standing on the principle of God’s word that marriage is between one man and one woman, said the Rev. Mark Harris, pastor of First Baptist Church of Charlotte and a leader in the amendment campaign. “And I believe that message has gotten across.”

However, one dispassionate observer, Duke law professor Mike Munger, noted that despite all the celebration by pro-family groups, the battle for marriage in the state has really just begun. “The screaming, excruciating paradox of all this is that supporters wanted to take this out of the judges’ hands,” Munger noted to the *Charlotte Observer*. “Clearly it will have the opposite effect.... There will be litigation, and judges will have to decide what the darn thing means.”



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But the FRC's Tony Perkins noted that regardless of such challenges, a solid majority of Americans will continue to fight for marriage. "Despite the relentless lawsuits and attempts to marginalize supporters of traditional marriage, a clear majority of the American people have not given up on standing in support of marriage," he said. "Instead, the evidence suggests they want to see it strengthened and preserved for future generations."

Photo of Billy Graham: AP Images



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