



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on February 14, 2012

## Pro-Family Groups Begin Effort to Overturn “Gay Marriage” in Washington State

On February 13 Washington Governor Chris Gregoire (left) affixed her signature to a law making her state the seventh to legalize homosexual marriage, even as pro-family forces were preparing a referendum that will challenge the measure and give voters the final say on how marriage is defined in the state.



As Gregoire signed the law, which is scheduled to take effect June 7, she declared it “a day historians will mark as a milestone for equal rights, a day when we did what was right, we did what was just, and we did what was fair.”

But on the same day, reported the [Associated Press](#), leaders of the pro-family coalition [Preserve Marriage Washington](#) were busy filing Referendum 73 to put the law before the voters for what they hope will be a repeal. According to the [Seattle Post Intelligencer](#), they have until June 6 to gather 120,577 signatures to put the referendum on the ballot in November, effectively blocking homosexual couples from getting married until the outcome of the state-wide vote.

Among the leaders in the fight to preserve marriage in Washington is Joseph Backholm, head of the state’s [Family Policy Institute](#), who said his group is working to give voters the final say on the issue. “Marriage is the union of one man and one woman for good reason,” Backholm said following passage of the homosexual marriage bill. “Marriage is society’s way of bringing men and women together so that children can be raised by, and cared for by, their mother and father — the people responsible for bringing them into the world. It is the most-important, child-focused institution of society and we will fight to preserve it. Voters will have the opportunity to define marriage in our state.”

Among the state and national groups that are combining forces to get the referendum on the ballot are the Family Policy Institute, Stand for Marriage Washington, [Concerned Women for America](#), and the [National Organization for Marriage](#) (NOM). In addition, organizers said they expect hundreds of churches and individuals to pitch in to gather the needed signatures.

“We call on the community of faith and all citizens to join in this referendum to give the voters of Washington the right to decide the definition of marriage in our state,” said Republican State Representative Matt Shea, who is helping in the effort through Stand for Marriage Washington. “Already we have had an outpouring of support from pastors, legislators, and individuals who are ready to go to work to preserve marriage in our state.”

Upon signing the bill legalizing homosexual marriage, Gregoire recalled that a vote by Washington residents in 2009 was “the first time any state has voted to uphold domestic partner rights in the nation.” She added that with regards to the impending referendum, “Washington will say ‘yes’ [to same-sex marriage] because a family is a family.”



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But Shea said he was confident the people of Washington will follow the majority of other states in confirming traditional marriage. “Thirty-one other states have voted on marriage,” he said, “and every one has voted to preserve marriage as the union of one man and one woman. Washington state will do the same.”

Added Joe Fuiten, a Seattle pastor and a leader in the efforts to protect traditional families: “I think in the end, people are going to preserve marriage.”

Shortly after Gregoire signed the measure, Maggie Gallagher, founder of the National Organization for Marriage, appeared on both local and national talk programs, defending the efforts to protect marriage. To charges that groups like hers were causing “gay” couples a lot of pain and misery, Gallagher told national TV talk show host [Thom Hartmann](#): “I’ve certainly always tried to make my arguments in ways that are respectful of people who disagree. When people say that ‘this is causing me a lot of pain,’ all I can say I say is, ‘I’m sorry; that is not my intention.’ But I think America is a country where we have to go out and fight for what we believe is right and good.”

Meanwhile, homosexual activists are pushing measure in several other states to legalize homosexual unions. Legislation is being considered in Maryland, and on February 13 New Jersey’s Democrat-controlled state Senate approved a homosexual marriage bill. Republican Governor Chris Christie has vowed to veto the measure if it reaches his desk.

Similarly, a referendum to legalize homosexual marriage has qualified for the November ballot in Maine. By contrast, Minnesotans will vote in November on a proposed constitutional amendment defining marriage as only between a man and a woman.

Thus far, in addition to Washington, homosexual marriage has been legalized in New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Iowa — as well as in the District of Columbia.



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