



Homosexual “Marriage” Bill Dies in Maryland Legislature

A bill in Maryland that would legalize homosexual marriage appears to be dead for the year, killed in part by efforts from African-American churches committed to defending traditional marriage and family values.



While the bill had passed easily in the state Senate, and Democrats held a significant majority in the state House of Delegates, following a three-hour debate March 11 on the House floor, instead of calling for a vote on passage of the bill, House leadership instead called for a voice vote for the measure to be sent back to committee. That motion passed easily and the bill was put on hold until next year, when Democratic leadership and homosexual activists will again apply pressure to legalize same-sex marriage.

Proponents of traditional marriage considered the turn of events something of a miracle, since they had all but thrown in the towel on passage after the Senate approved the measure and Maryland's Democratic governor, Martin O'Malley, had pledged to sign it into law, which would have made the Free State just the latest to cave in to intense lobbying efforts by homosexual activists.

What turned the tide for traditional marriage and family? The difference apparently was the opposition from predominantly black churches, as well as from the Maryland Catholic Conference, reported [Baptist Press News](#). Democrats hold a 98-43 advantage over Republicans in the House, but a third (34) of the Democrats belong to the legislative black caucus. With all but one Republican opposing the bill, the bill needed support from the black caucus to get the 71 votes required for passage. In the two weeks before floor debate, at least two members of the black caucus made public switches from co-sponsoring the bill to opposing it.

One of the members of the black caucus, legislator Emmett Burns, expressed his opposition to the bill, his comments reflecting how offended many blacks are at the efforts of homosexual activists to draw parallels between the historic civil rights movement and their own campaign to normalize homosexual behavior.

Show me your Selma, Alabama, Burns challenged homosexual activists, pointing out that the bill violates natural law. It always denies a child either a father or a mother. It promotes the homosexual lifestyle. It turns a moral wrong into a civil right.

One prominent black pastor, Robert Anderson Jr. of Colonial Baptist Church in Randallstown, Md., pointed out the stark differences between the 1960s battle for civil rights and the campaign to normalize the homosexual lifestyle. We didn't choose to be born black, Anderson told Baptist Press News. To be black or African-American is not sin. The fact that we fought for civil rights, we were just



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on March 15, 2011

fighting for justice for any man, any woman regardless of their skin color. To try to create a system and special laws for a group of citizens that are living in immorality and wanting to force all of us to embrace that as if it is morally equivalent, that is wrong.

Said Derek McCoy, president of the Maryland Family Council, This is not a civil rights issue. This is an issue where there is a group of radical folks who want to push an agenda and want to redefine it for everybody else.

At least seven delegates to the Maryland legislature are openly homosexual, and many of them rose to speak in favor of the bill during debate. No church has to recognize us or marry us, assured lesbian lawmaker Heather Mizeau. You can still teach its immoral if you so choose to live in a fear-based world.

One pro-homosexual lawmaker, Democratic Delegate Luiz Simmons, challenged the long-held Christian admonition against homosexuality, asking during debate, How can we address the celestial arguments of the opponents of same-sex marriage who truly believe that they can decipher, translate and represent the position of God on the question of same-sex marriage? Mr. Chairman, I have checked the witness list and God has not signed up either for or against the bill.

The states leading homosexual activist group, Equality Maryland, had worked overtime in efforts to see the bill passed, and after the vote expressed its confidence that Maryland would eventually legalize same-sex marriage. Though we are disappointed that we must continue to fight for marriage equality, todays move was a strategic step that will allow us to fight and win in the future, the group said in a statement. We celebrate that for the first time marriage equality legislation made it through the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, the Senate, the House Judiciary Committee, and was debated in the House of Delegates.

Homosexual marriage has been legalized in some form in several other eastern seaboard states, including Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont, as well as in the District of Columbia, and in Rhode Island lawmakers are currently debating legislation to normalize homosexual relationships there as well.

In addition to the black pastors and churches, Catholic officials led by the Maryland Catholic Conference were heavily involved in battling the homosexual marriage bill. After the Senate had voted in favor of the bill, Marylands bishops signed a letter urging Catholics to contact their legislators to oppose the measure in the House.

Maryland was founded by Catholics in the 17th century, and the Archdiocese of Baltimore says the Catholic population in Baltimore and its nine counties alone is nearly a half million, noted the [Associated Press](#) in its coverage of the story. Such opposition would weigh heavily on both Republicans and Democrats, said Donald F. Norris, chairman of the Department of Public Policy at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. The Catholic church can get out the faithful to lobby very, very heavily, Norris said. So it doesnt surprise me that in Maryland, a progressive state, that gay marriage cant yet garner the votes needed.



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