

I retired from the Army Guard in 2015 and my spouse retired from the Air Force in 2021. We met when we both were deployed to Iraq in 2007. When marriage finally became legal in 2015 in ND, we were married in August that same year. The resolution to restrict marriage to only a man and a woman fails to recognize the fundamental principles of equality, freedom, and love that are core to our society. Marriage should not be confined by gender but rather defined by the mutual respect, commitment, and love between two individuals, regardless of their sex or gender identity. In a diverse and evolving world, it is essential to ensure that all people, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, have the right to marry the person they love. By imposing such a restrictive definition of marriage, we deny individuals their basic human rights and fail to honor the values of inclusivity and dignity. Denying same-sex couples the legal right to marry undermines the ideals of liberty and justice upon which our society was founded. It perpetuates harmful discrimination and sends a message that certain relationships are less valid or deserving of recognition than others. Marriage is not about gender—it is about the partnership between two individuals who choose to spend their lives together, in love and support. History has shown that legal recognition of same-sex marriage does not harm society. On the contrary, it strengthens families, promotes equality, and fosters social harmony. By rejecting this resolution, we affirm that love transcends gender and that every person deserves the right to marry whomever they choose. In conclusion, marriage should be a personal and inclusive choice for all people, free from discriminatory barriers. Let us move forward with compassion, fairness, and respect for all individuals, regardless of their gender or sexual orientation.