

Subject: Opposition to HCR 3013 - Upholding Marriage Equality

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to House Concurrent Resolution 3013, which seeks to overturn the landmark Supreme Court decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* and redefine marriage as solely between one man and one woman. This resolution is not only a step backward for civil rights but also an affront to the principles of equality and justice that our nation strives to uphold.

Marriage Equality is a Fundamental Right

The Supreme Court's decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* recognized that marriage is a fundamental right inherent to the liberty of all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation. By attempting to overturn this decision, HCR 3013 seeks to strip away the rights of same-sex couples to marry, relegating them to second-class citizenship. This is a direct violation of the Fourteenth Amendment, which guarantees equal protection under the law for all citizens.

Promoting Discrimination and Inequality

HCR 3013 promotes discrimination by enshrining a definition of marriage that excludes same-sex couples. This exclusion not only denies them the legal benefits and protections afforded to heterosexual couples but also sends a harmful message that their relationships are less valid or worthy. Such discrimination has no place in our laws or society, where we should be striving for inclusivity and acceptance.

Impact on Families and Children

Same-sex couples, like their heterosexual counterparts, form loving, committed relationships and families. Many same-sex couples are raising children, providing them with stable, nurturing homes. Research consistently shows that children raised by same-sex parents fare just as well as those raised by heterosexual parents in terms of their psychological, social, and educational outcomes. By attempting to invalidate these families, HCR 3013 undermines the well-being of countless children who thrive in loving homes with same-sex parents.

Respecting Religious Freedom

While some proponents of HCR 3013 argue that it is necessary to protect religious freedom, it is important to remember that marriage equality does not infringe upon religious beliefs or practices. Religious institutions retain the right to define marriage according to their doctrines and to refuse to perform marriages that conflict with their beliefs. However, civil marriage is a legal institution that should be accessible to all, regardless of religious affiliation. The separation of church and state is a foundational principle of our democracy, and it must be upheld.

Conclusion

In conclusion, HCR 3013 is a regressive measure that seeks to undermine the progress we have made toward equality and justice for all. I urge you to reject this resolution and to stand in support of marriage equality, ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation, have the right to marry the person they love.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

McAyla Thompson

