



## North Carolina Marriage Protection Amendment Fact Sheet

A bi-partisan majority of the North Carolina Legislature has voted to put the North Carolina Marriage Protection Amendment on the ballot to preserve marriage in our state as the union of one man and one woman. North Carolinians will finally have the opportunity to vote on preserving and protecting marriage in our state constitution, just as 30 other states have already been able to do.

### North Carolina Marriage Protection Amendment Language

FOR  AGAINST

“Marriage between one man and one woman is the only domestic legal union that shall be valid or recognized in this State. **This section does not prohibit a private party from entering into contracts with another private party; nor does this section prohibit courts from adjudicating the rights of private parties pursuant to such contracts.**”

### Fact: The State of North Carolina should protect marriage.

Marriage as the union of a man and a woman is uniquely in the common good and serves as the basic building block of a civilized and productive society. Marriage benefits men and women, their children, our economy, and the state as a whole. It is not merely a private contract, but a social institution of great public importance.

### Fact: Marriage is vulnerable to being redefined by legislators or activist judges.

Activist judges in other states have issued decisions redefining marriage to make it genderless, thus imposing same-sex marriage without the people of those states being able to vote. This has occurred in Massachusetts, Iowa, Connecticut and California. In the District of Columbia, activist judges prevented the people from voting on marriage. Without the people being able to vote, legislatures have redefined marriage in New Hampshire, Vermont, District of Columbia, and New York. All told, same-sex “marriage” is allowed in six states and the District of Columbia. Any of the same-sex couples “married” in one of those states could move to North Carolina and sue to have their “marriage” recognized by the State of North Carolina. These types of lawsuits have already been filed across the country in Texas, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Wyoming, New Mexico, Nebraska, Missouri, Indiana, and Rhode Island. **After years of anticipating it, a lawsuit was filed in North Carolina challenging our marriage laws in December of 2011.** Each of these lawsuits demands that the definition of marriage for *everyone* be permanently changed to suit the needs of just *one same-sex couple*.

### Fact: The Marriage Protection Amendment ensures that North Carolinians control the definition of marriage in our state.

By protecting marriage in our State Constitution, as 30 other states have already done, we will ensure that we the people, and not legislators or activist judges, permanently secure the definition of marriage in our state.

**Fact: The definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman is not already in the North Carolina Constitution.**

There are marriage laws in North Carolina that permit only traditional marriage, but they are only statutes and can be changed by a future legislative act or ruled “unconstitutional” by activist judges. The North Carolina Marriage Protection Amendment puts our State’s historic definition of marriage into the Constitution where it will be protected from these threats.

**Fact: The Marriage Protection Amendment does not take away any private contractual rights from same-sex couples.**

The Marriage Protection Amendment is very clear: “This section does not prohibit a private party from entering into contracts with another private party; nor does this section prohibit courts from adjudicating the rights of private parties pursuant to such contracts.” Thus, the Amendment does not interfere with your right, or the rights of others, to enter into, and enforce, private legal agreements. Under the Amendment, private companies can provide health benefits to any couple or family member it wants, and that agreement can be enforced in court. Nothing in the Amendment prohibits local governments or the UNC System from providing an array of benefits to partners, roommates, family members, or others designated by employees or students, if they choose to do so.

**Fact: Children do best when raised by their married mother and father.**

The overwhelming body of social science evidence establishes that children do best when raised by their married mother and father in a low conflict marriage. While death, divorce and other circumstances don’t permit this ideal environment for every child, North Carolinians agree that, as a state, we should promote and encourage the best possible environment for our children, whether at home, school, or elsewhere. When children are raised by their mother and father, they experience less poverty, commit far fewer suicides and far fewer crimes, are half as likely to become pregnant out of wedlock, develop better academically and socially, and are healthier physically and emotionally when they become adults. In short, children need both a mom and a dad!

**Fact: North Carolina is the only southern state that has not protected marriage in its state constitution.**

The Marriage Protection Amendment will allow ALL voters in North Carolina to exercise their voice in preserving and protecting marriage in our state. Every state to consider a marriage amendment has adopted it (30 in all), and North Carolina is ready to be next. Please vote for the amendment on May 8, 2012 so we may join 30 other states in protecting marriage in our constitution, where an activist judge or future legislature cannot overturn it.

To get involved in the campaign to adopt the Marriage Protection Amendment, go to [www.VoteFORMarriageNC.com](http://www.VoteFORMarriageNC.com)

Paid for by Vote FOR Marriage NC