



June 2, 2009

United States Senate
Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Sessions:

On behalf of the millions of families represented by Focus on the Family, we urge you to oppose S. 424, a bill that seeks to grant special immigrant visas to “permanent partners” of United States citizens.

This bill will create opportunities for abuse and fraud of United States immigration laws but more importantly, S. 424 is a fatal step toward the purposeful undermining of marriage, this country’s most pro-child institution. There are important reasons why only legal marriage between one man and one woman has historically been allowed the privilege of spousal-sponsored immigrant visa status.

Marriage has been a source of stability and vitality for this country and every thriving civilization. It exists because the sexual union of a woman and a man results in children. And social science evidence for the last 30 years demonstrates that children do best by every measure when raised by their biological, married mother and father.

Moreover, Congress expressed its approval and endorsement of one-man, one-woman marriage when it passed the Defense of Marriage Act in 1996 (DOMA). The purpose behind DOMA was to support and endorse traditional marriage. If passed, S. 424 would undermine this policy.



Helping Families Thrive

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States and voters across the country have repeatedly upheld the time-honored definition of marriage. At least 40 states protect this definition either by statute or within their constitutions. Moreover, polls show that a majority of Americans support one-man, one-woman marriage.

Supporters of S. 424 seek to use Congress to gain legal recognition for a lifestyle in the name of “equality.” But the institution of marriage is *not* a legal vehicle for equality; it is a social institution with children at its heart. If passed, S. 424 will be much more than a minor tweak to federal law, it will be a large step toward the redefinition of vital family policy with inestimable consequences for our children.

We urge you to uphold the institution of marriage and reject the redefinition of “family” to grant special immigrant visas for same-sex couples.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Minnery".

Tom Minnery
Senior Vice President
Government and Public Policy
Focus on the Family Action

