



## Legislation Text

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INTRODUCTORY\*

CITY OF BALTIMORE  
COUNCIL BILL        R  
(Resolution)

Introduced by: Councilmember Henry

### A RESOLUTION ENTITLED

A COUNCIL RESOLUTION concerning

### **Request for Support of State Legislation - Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act**

FOR the purpose of urging the Baltimore City House and Senate Delegations to the 2008 Maryland General Assembly and the Governor of Maryland to end discrimination against same-sex couples and their families by passing Senate Bill 290 and House Bill 351, the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act, which would amend state law to remove references to sex and gender as eligibility requirements for a civil marriage license and enact a law providing for equal access to marriage and all of its legal benefits and obligations by all persons, regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

..Body

WHEREAS, Maryland is home to thousands of gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals, including many same-sex couples, many raising children; and

WHEREAS, These families deserve the same rights and legal protections as other families under the law, including the protection of their children's economic interests by insuring their access to the resources of both parents; and

WHEREAS, Marriage is a unique civil institution, administered by the state, and separate and distinct from any religious, ethnic, or other tradition; and

WHEREAS, Marriage bestows thousands of state and federal rights, protections, and responsibilities that are otherwise unavailable to gay and lesbian families; and

WHEREAS, The inability to access these legal protections results in significant harm to these families, including financial insecurity, lack of insurance and other benefits, and access to the court system should dissolution occur; and

WHEREAS, Discriminatory marriage laws result in significant harm to individuals and couples by perpetuating homophobia, just as anti-miscegenation laws barring people of different races from marrying perpetuated racism and social ostracism; and

WHEREAS, Discriminatory marriage laws and court decisions undermine Maryland's commitment to equality, privacy, and justice for all of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, The opportunity to publicly and legally commit to share one's life with a person of one's choice is for many people one of the most central aspects of human experience, and denial of marriage to same-sex couples is the denial of a fundamental civil right.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the City Council of Baltimore urges the Baltimore City Senate and House Delegations to the 2008 Maryland General Assembly and the Governor of Maryland to end discrimination against same-sex couples and their families by passing Senate Bill 290 and House Bill 351, the Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Protection Act, which would amend state law to remove references to sex and gender as eligibility requirements for a civil marriage license and enact a law providing for equal access to marriage and all of its legal benefits and obligations by all persons, regardless of sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Governor of Maryland, the Honorable Chair and Members of the Baltimore City House and Senate Delegations to the 2008 Maryland General Assembly, the Mayor, and the Mayor's Legislative Liaison to the City Council.

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