

TO PROTECT MARRIAGE - VOTE "YES" ON CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT C

What Does Constitutional Amendment C Say?

"Only marriage between a man and a woman shall be valid or recognized in South Dakota. The uniting of two or more persons in a civil union, domestic partnership, or other quasi-marital relationship shall not be valid or recognized in South Dakota."

Why Amend the State Constitution? Doesn't State Law Already Address This?

South Dakota statute defines marriage as between a man and a woman, which is consistent with the traditional understanding of marriage. However, an amendment to the state constitution establishes a stronger legal recognition of the unique status of traditional marriage in this state. This additional protection is important, given judicial and legislative actions in other states that have altered the legal definition of marriage.

Why is it vital that marriage be the exclusive union of a man and a woman?

Millennia of human experience and ethical reflection show the family to be the foundation of society. The institution of marriage plays an essential role in the continuation of the human race, the full and proper development of each person and the establishment of a society rooted in personal dignity, social stability and mutual respect. Marriage is the foundation of the family. Thus, while marriage is a personal relationship, it also has public significance. (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Between Man and Woman: Questions and Answers About Marriage and Same-Sex Unions", 2003, #5).

Society needs the presence and contribution of males and females. Marriage is the primary pattern for male-female relationships. It has social value insofar as it models the way in which women and men can live interdependently and commit, for the whole of life, to seek the good of each other.

Does denying marriage to homosexual persons demonstrate unjust discrimination or lack of respect for them as persons?

No. Because a marriage and a same-sex union are essentially different realities, it is not unjust to treat them differently. "In fact, justice requires society to do so" (USCCB, Q&A, #6). "The Catechism of the Catholic Church urges that homosexual persons 'be treated with respect, compassion, and sensitivity' (#2358). It also encourages chaste friendships." (USCCB, Q&A, #6)

Respecting the dignity of homosexual persons does not conflict with upholding God's intent for marriage in which sexual relations have their proper and exclusive place. The State can justly give married couples benefits and rights it does not extend to others. It would be wrong to redefine marriage as a means of providing benefits to those who cannot rightly claim marriage (USCCB, Q&A, #7).

Why the need to define what marriage is not?

The first sentence of the amendment states what marriage is and the second sentence states what marriage is not. The second sentence prevents any attempt to recognize "marriage" by another name. It does not, however, prevent people from making private agreements with each other, such as a durable power of attorney for health care or financial matters, wills, business contracts, etc.

