



## Protecting Marriage

### Why A Marriage Protection Amendment Will Help, Not Hurt, NC's Economy

written by:  
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**T**HE ARGUMENTS FOR SAME-SEX "MARRIAGE" GET EVER STRANGER: SAME-SEX "MARRIAGE" PROponents IN NORTH CAROLINA ARE TELLING LAWMAKERS—AND ANYONE ELSE WHO WILL LISTEN—THAT A MARRIAGE PROTECTION AMENDMENT (MPA) WILL ACTUALLY BE "BAD FOR BUSINESS" IN THE TAR HEEL STATE. HERE IS WHAT ALEX MILLER, INTERIM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF EQUALITY NORTH CAROLINA, SAID RECENTLY ABOUT THE PROPOSED MPA LEGISLATION: "THIS AMENDMENT AND THE CAMPAIGN AROUND IT WILL PUT OFF BUSINESSES AT A TIME WHEN NORTH CAROLINA NEEDS JOBS MORE THAN EVER..."<sup>1</sup>

That's an amazing whopper of a claim, and one that we are hearing more and more often.

For example, in Rhode Island, newly elected Gov. Lincoln Chafee, actually touted same-sex "marriage" as key to his economic development plan for the state. In his inaugural address, Chafee actually claimed passing same-sex "marriage" would do "more for economic growth in our state than any economic development loan."<sup>2</sup>

Clearly, a strange new meme has been launched. The people launching it must believe themselves immune from rational scrutiny. What's the evidence that state marriage amendments hurt, or that same-sex "marriage" helps, economic growth?

Well, consider the state-level data on per capita personal income growth between 1999 and 2009, published by the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis.<sup>3</sup> Take a look at the following chart: eight of the top 10 states with the fastest growth in per capital personal income from 1999-2009 have state marriage amendments. *None have same-sex "marriage."* For example:

**1999-2009 average annual growth rate of PCPI**  
(Per capita personal income)

State	PCPI increase	Marriage amendment?
Wyoming	5.9%	
North Dakota	5.7%	Yes
Louisiana	5.3%	Yes
Montana	4.7%	Yes
Oklahoma	4.6%	Yes
South Dakota	4.4%	Yes
Hawaii	4.4%	Yes
West Virginia	4.3%	
Arkansas	4.2%	Yes
Alaska	4.2%	Yes

The top five states for income growth in that decade are: Wyoming, North Dakota, Louisiana, Montana, and Oklahoma. Four of the five states with the fastest income growth per capita have state marriage protection amendments, and *none have same-sex “marriage.”*

Or consider another potential measure of a state’s business climate: What do CEOs think? *Chief Executive* magazine annually surveys 543 CEOs to identify which states are the best and the worst for job growth and business. In 2009, the top five states for job growth in CEOs’ opinions were: Texas, North Carolina, Florida, Georgia, and Tennessee.<sup>4</sup> Four out of five of these states, with the exception of North Carolina, have marriage protection amendments, and *none have same-sex “marriage.”*

The worst states, according to the magazine’s CEO survey, are California, New York, Michigan, New Jersey, and yes, Massachusetts<sup>5</sup>—three of which have legalized same-sex “marriage” or have done so in the past (in the case of California).

Or consider another data point that comes from a recent U.S. Chamber of Commerce survey, “Enterprising States,” which includes a ranking for what it called “middle-class job growth.” These are presumably the good jobs that the creative class seeks or fosters.

The top five states for middle-class job growth between 2002 and 2009 are: Utah, Wyoming, Nevada, Hawaii, and Texas.<sup>6</sup> Once again, four out of

the five have state marriage protection amendments, and none have same-sex “marriage.”

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce also compiles a list of states that are the top “overall growth performers”: North Dakota, Virginia, South Dakota, Maryland, and Wyoming.<sup>7</sup> The top three all have state marriage protection amendments, and none have gay “marriage.” (Indeed, Maryland’s legislature—in a surprise move—rejected a same-sex “marriage” bill in March 2011, after a large public outpouring of objections, including from black churches.)

Perhaps if social conservatives in North Carolina succeed in passing a marriage protection amendment, middle-class job growth will come plunging to a halt, but somehow I doubt it.

North Carolina *already* has a state law defining marriage as only between a man and a woman and prohibiting the legal recognition of same-sex unions. Even so, the state was rated the Number 2 “Best State for Business” by the May 2011 issue of *Chief Executive* magazine for the third consecutive year.<sup>8</sup>

Obviously, North Carolina’s strong marriage laws have not hurt the state’s economy or its standing in the business community.

A marriage amendment will do one thing, and one thing only: take the decision about what marriage is out of the hands of activist judges and give it to the people of North Carolina, where it belongs. ❖

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## Will the Marriage Protection Amendment Prohibit Same-sex Couples in NC from Receiving Benefits?

One of the main “talking points” against the MPA that is being circulated by anti-marriage activists is that a Marriage Protection Amendment could take away “rights and responsibilities that are currently available to same-sex couples” in North Carolina, specifically “private benefits such as health insurance for LGBT couples, unmarried opposite-sex couples, and their children.”<sup>1</sup> However, this claim is *not true*.

Consider the following points from the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) about the MPA legislation and what it would *NOT* do:<sup>2</sup>

- It would not prohibit individuals in same-sex relationships or other relationships from receiving governmental benefits, if any, that they receive under current law. It merely limits how the government can grant or extend rights and benefits.
- It would not prohibit governmental units from granting benefits to its employees that they could then share with another person of his or her choice.
- It would not prohibit private employers from recognizing non-marital relationships (both opposite-sex and same-sex), such as domestic partnerships or civil unions, or from providing benefits to individuals in these relationships.
- It would not prohibit enforcing any private contract that benefits the parties of same-sex or other unmarried relationships.
- It would not prohibit the Legislature from extending benefits to unmarried persons, so long as it does not premise the extension of those benefits to persons in a specific kind of relationship.

1. <http://equalitync.org/news/news/news1/amendment>

2. Based on an analysis of the MPA legislation by the Alliance Defense Fund, 9/8/11.

ENDNOTES:

- 1) <http://equalitync.org/news1/stam-folwell-press-conference-raises-uncomfortable-questions-for-g.o.p>
- 2) [http://www.projo.com/news/efitzpatrick/edward\\_fitzpatrick\\_13\\_02-13-11\\_87MD4Q3\\_v65.178a1bb.html](http://www.projo.com/news/efitzpatrick/edward_fitzpatrick_13_02-13-11_87MD4Q3_v65.178a1bb.html)
- 3) <http://www.bea.gov/regional/bearfacts/statebf.cfm>
- 4) Donion, JP, "Best/Worst States for Business," ChiefExecutive.net (Chief Executive magazine), 5/3/11, as found at: <http://chiefexecutive.net/best-worst-states-for-business>
- 5) Ibid.
- 6) <http://ncf.uschamber.com/wp-content/uploads/final-report-Enterprising-States-email.pdf>
- 7) <http://ncf.uschamber.com/enterprising-states/>
- 8) NC Department of Commerce, "North Carolina Remains No. 2 Best State for Business, According to CEOs," 5/6/2011, <http://www.thrivenc.com/newsandevents/north-carolina-remains-no-2-best-state-business-according-ceos>