



# ISSUE BRIEF

**This week the United States Senate will vote on the Marriage Protection Amendment (MPA) to the U.S. Constitution. This proposal would ensure that marriage in the United States will consist of the union of one man and one woman.**

**Here are the facts:**

- Public opinion remains firmly opposed to the redefinition of marriage — 58 to 39 percent in a May 2006 poll — but same-sex marriage advocates have continued to ask judges to redefine marriage to include same-sex couples.
- Since 1971 at least 46 states have had to battle in their courts those who would redefine marriage out of existence. Nine states are now facing lawsuits that would force those states to accept same-sex marriage. Many other states are facing court battles brought on by homosexual couples who have “married” in Massachusetts or entered civil unions in Vermont and then moved to another state.
- Nineteen states now have constitutional amendments and 26 other states have similar statutes protecting marriage as solely between a man and a woman. Voters in seven states will vote on constitutional amendments this year and another eight states are working to send constitutional amendments to voters either this year or in 2008.

**The need for a U.S. Constitutional amendment protecting marriage grows greater every day:**

- In the 19 states that passed constitutional amendments voters supported the amendment by huge margins (up to 86%). However, same-sex marriage advocates turn to the courts to override the people’s will – as we saw recently in Georgia.
- State amendments are an important step – however, in 2005 a federal district court in Nebraska struck down a state constitutional amendment passed by 70 percent of Nebraska voters. Without protection in the U.S. Constitution state amendments are vulnerable to activist judges.
- The Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), passed overwhelmingly by the U.S. Congress in 1996, is already under assault in the states – if these cases reach the nation’s highest court as it is currently configured, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia warns that DOMA would be declared unconstitutional.
- The U.S. Constitution provides the amendment process as the ultimate protector of state rights by requiring that three-fourths of the states must ratify any amendment.

**CALL YOUR U.S. SENATORS TODAY AND ASK THEM TO VOTE FOR S.J. RES. 1, THE MARRIAGE PROTECTION AMENDMENT**

**Call the U.S. Senate main switchboard below and ask to be connected to the Senators from your state (202) 224-3121**