

DOES RELIGIOUS LIBERTY EQUAL HOMOPHOBIA?

Recently New Hampshire Governor John Lynch said that he would not sign a bill that ordered same-sex marriage unless it strengthened religious provisions. Led by advocates of gay marriage, the House voted against amending the bill to insure religious liberty protections.

Helping to lead the fight for gay marriage in New Hampshire was Rep. Steve Vaillancourt. He proved why champions of religious liberty must resist gay marriage: he worked to kill the bill because it provided too much insulation for religious institutions.

In other words, it was not good enough for Vaillancourt to secure a win on gay marriage—he had to have it all. And having it all meant denying the right of religious institutions not to sanction homosexual marriage. Indeed, he said the religious liberty amendment would “enshrine homophobia into the statutes of the New Hampshire legislature.”

So this is what we have come to in America: religious objections to homosexuality, rooted in the Bible, natural law and the teachings of most religions, is nothing more than a pernicious phobia. Not too long ago, such objections simply constituted common sense.

A few days after voting against strengthening the religious provisions, language was added to the same-sex marriage bill. The new clause gained the approval of Gov. Lynch: “Each religious organization, association, or society has exclusive control over its own religious doctrine, policy, teachings and beliefs regarding who may marry within their faith.” A clause was also added stating that a fraternal group connected to a church could refuse to participate in same-sex marriages if

the group's purpose is educational or charitable.

With this language added to the bill, it passed both the House and Senate and was signed into law by the governor in early June.