

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND GAY MARRIAGE IN NYS

Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the impending New York State bill on same-sex marriage:

New York State does not believe in “power to the people,” and that is why it is not submitting the issue of gay marriage to a ballot initiative. If it did, it would lose: in the more than 30 states which have put this matter to a vote, never once have the people failed to affirm marriage as a union between a man and a woman. Only elites differ with that judgment.

The New York State legislature is one vote away from passing a gay marriage bill. What is holding it up is pressure from Catholics, Protestants, Jews and others: they want to insulate religious institutions from state encroachment. That they have to fight for their First Amendment rights shows how threatening gay-marriage legislation really is.

The threats to religious liberty are not hypothetical. A New Mexico photographer who refused to photograph a gay couple's commitment ceremony was forced to pay the couple's attorney's fees; Christians in New Jersey who objected to allowing a gay union ceremony in their privately owned facility have had their tax-exempt status stripped; a psychologist from Georgia was fired after she declined to counsel a lesbian about her relationship. And so on.

In other words, there are real concerns that if gay marriage passes in New York, religious liberty will be jeopardized. That is why if this bill passes, it is imperative that religious rights be firmly locked in from the get-go. And it is nothing if not bizarre to insist that marriage be extended to two people who are positively disqualified by nature, and nature's God, from starting a family.