

# RELIGIOUS LIBERTY AND SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

Prior to the passing of the New York State bill legalizing same-sex marriage, we issued a news release stating that New York does not believe in “power to the people.” If it did, it would have submitted the issue of redefining marriage to a ballot initiative.

Had they done this, however, they knew that they would have lost: 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.

What held up the passage of the bill was pressure from Catholics, Protestants, Jews and others: they wanted to insulate religious institutions from state encroachment. That they had to fight for their First Amendment rights shows how threatening same-sex 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 since same-sex marriage has passed in New York, religious liberty may be jeopardized. That is why it was imperative that religious rights be firmly locked in from the get-go.

Finally, 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.