

Legislation Text

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Urging the Pennsylvania General Assembly to oppose and defeat Senate Bill No. 1250, which would amend the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to provide that only a union of marriage between a man and a woman shall be legally recognized or valid in Pennsylvania.

WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania General Assembly introduced Senate Bill No. 1250, which proposes an amendment to the Constitution of the Commonwealth that would provide, “No union other than a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as marriage or the functional equivalent of marriage by the Commonwealth.”; and

WHEREAS, The Council of the City of Philadelphia decries this proposed legislation, which would constitutionalize the discrimination and marginalization of members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgendered (“LGBT”) community; and

WHEREAS, The Commonwealth and its municipalities should be working to ensure the equal treatment and rights of all Pennsylvania citizens, regardless of race, color, creed, sexual orientation or gender identity; and

WHEREAS, In a step towards accomplishing that goal, the City of Philadelphia, made it unlawful to discriminate against any person because of sexual orientation or gender identity regarding employment, housing or public accommodations; and

WHEREAS, Under the leadership of former Mayor Edward G. Rendell, the City extended “equality of treatment with respect to leave and benefits of exempt employees of the Executive and Administrative branch who are members of domestic partnerships”; and

WHEREAS, As a City, Philadelphia has recognized that “[s]ignificant changes in our society have resulted in the creation of diverse living arrangements and family relationships” and that these diverse living arrangements and relationships deserve the protections extended to ‘traditional’ family structures; and

WHEREAS, The proposed constitutional amendment, Senate Bill No. 1250, would undermine and contradict the will of the City of Philadelphia in achieving the equal treatment and rights of members of the LGBT community; and

WHEREAS, City Council respectfully suggests that the Pennsylvania General Assembly direct its attention and resources to the various crises currently facing Pennsylvania’s citizens, rather than spending these limited resources codifying discrimination and intolerance; and

WHEREAS, The Pennsylvania General Assembly has shown a callous appreciation of citizen’s ‘rights’ by protecting gun owners who refuse to report lost or stolen weapons, many of which go on to be used in violent crimes, choosing instead to pursue legislation that would create the right to discriminate against two individuals in a non-traditional relationship whose only ‘crime’ is offending certain puritanical sensibilities; and

WHEREAS, The Senate of Pennsylvania has failed to advance legislation passed by the Pennsylvania House of Representatives that addresses access to affordable healthcare, a sensible energy policy and other pressing needs of its citizens; and

WHEREAS, City Council respectfully suggests that the Pennsylvania General Assembly's efforts would better be directed towards solving the \$4.8 billion funding deficit faced by Pennsylvania's public education system, rather than pursuing a legislative agenda fueled by prejudice and narrow-mindedness; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, That the City Council of Philadelphia does hereby urge the Pennsylvania General Assembly to oppose and defeat Senate Bill No. 1250, which would amend the Pennsylvania Constitution to provide that only a union of marriage between a man and a woman shall be legally recognized or valid in Pennsylvania.