

ACLU of Greater Miami

Presents a free public debate on

Gay Marriage Ban: What's the Real Story?

The American Civil Liberties Union of Florida's Greater Miami Chapter and Temple Israel are proud to present a timely and informative debate on the proposed amendment to Florida's Constitution banning gay marriage. The event is free and open to the public.

WHAT: **Public Debate on Florida's Proposed Gay Marriage Ban:**
What's the Real Story?

WHEN: **Tuesday, September 18, 2007 at 7:00 PM**

WHERE: **Temple Israel of Greater Miami, 137 NE 19 Street, Miami 33132**
(West of Biscayne Boulevard, ample free parking)

PANEL: **Nadine Smith**, Executive Director, Equality Florida
Karen Doering, Senior Counsel, National Center for Lesbian Rights
Rev. Nathaniel Wilcox, Associate Minister, Apostolic Revival Center
Jack Thompson, Attorney

MODERATOR: **Jim DeFede**, Jim Defede Show, *WINZ-AM 940*

Some Floridians, led by the group www.florida4marriage.org, are working to place a constitutional amendment on the November 2008 ballot by collecting 611,009 signatures from registered voters. Launched in February 2005, the proposed amendment states:

"Inasmuch as marriage is the legal union of only one man and one woman as husband and wife, no other legal union that is treated as a marriage or the substantial equivalent thereof shall be valid or recognized."

Those supporting the proposed constitutional amendment say that gay marriage is about redefining marriage to be something it has never been, and that marriage is the way our culture promotes monogamy, provides a way for males and females to build a life together, and assures every child has a mother and father. The Florida Coalition to Protect Marriage has raised \$438,000, with \$300,000 coming from the Republican Party of Florida and another \$90,000 from such groups as the Florida Baptist Convention, Florida Catholic Conference and Focus on the Family.

Floridians opposed to the constitutional amendment, led by www.fairnessforallfamilies.org, and www.floridaredandblue.com, say that the proposed amendment won't only ban gay marriage, but its broad wording could cause courts to strip away other rights, such as domestic partnership benefits for heterosexual couples like elderly Floridians who may live together outside of marriage for convenience, economic or security reasons. They point to a decision earlier this year by a Michigan appeals court that said Michigan's ban on same-sex marriage, adopted in the November 2004 election, may bar cities from offering health care for same-sex partners of public employees. That decision prompted legal battles in other states as well. Fairness for ALL Families has raised about \$75,000, and Florida Red and Blue has raised \$984,000 to oppose the amendment.

To pass, the amendment must receive 60 percent of the vote.