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Subject: FW: SDUT- - "Consequences of gay marriage already here"

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PROP 8: SAME-SEX MARRIAGE
Consequences of gay marriage already here

By Charles LiMandri, Esq.

Yes on 8 is surging because voters are beginning to catch a glimpse of the future if traditional marriage is permanently redefined.

Just over a week ago, Californians were treated to a dramatic photo of perplexed youngsters delivered to San Francisco's City Hall on a school field trip to see their first-grade teacher married to her lesbian partner. The faces of the children, with their trip slips hanging around their necks, created an image for the ages – and proof for parents that gay political advocates haven't just set their sights on marriage, but on our schools as well.

At about the same time, Connecticut's Supreme Court legalized gay marriage, apparently timed to influence California's vote. Connecticut Gov. Janet Lee responded to the ruling by saying, "There is no question that the court's decision does not express the will of the people." The governor's all-too-familiar words sent up a flare for voters who know Proposition 8 is more crucial than ever.

We are at a cultural crossroads, and in California the will of the people is about to point the way. Parents and millions of other passionate supporters of traditional marriage are pushing back in a statewide grass-roots campaign unlike any seen before in the United States. Yes on 8 is surging because voters are beginning to catch a glimpse of the future if traditional marriage is permanently redefined. Not only did the California Supreme Court legalize gay marriage, it also elevated gay couples to the highest position under the law, a "protected class." This means that now, whenever rights of an individual, a church, a teacher or a business collide with the desires of a same-sex couple, actions can be instantly defined as discrimination.

The willingness of aggressive gay activists to use this newly gained power is already apparent. In Massachusetts recently, parents of a second-grader learned that their child had been introduced to gay marriage during story time at school. His teacher shared a book about two princes meeting, kissing, marrying and becoming a "King and a King." When the parents questioned the teacher's choice of story, they were rebuffed. When they filed suit over the matter, the courts ruled that parents have no right to be consulted, no right to opt out, and no voice in opposing school curriculum that introduces gay marriage in a state where it is legal.

Freedom of religion is another fundamental right in America that has already taken a back seat to the "protected" rights of gay couples. In New Jersey last year, a United Methodist Church property was selected as a possible setting for a double lesbian wedding. The Methodist Church regularly held worship services and taught school at the site selected by the couples, and reserved the right to use the building for activities in keeping with its beliefs. When the lesbian couples complained to the state, New Jersey honored their rights over the religious rights of the church.

The United Methodist Church was punished and its tax exemption for the property removed. The consequences of permanently legalizing gay marriage need not be imagined, they are already here.

Our state domestic partnership statutes have been shaped by gay advocates and guarantee gay couples exactly the same rights that are bestowed upon a wife or a husband in a traditional marriage. What Proposition 8 would do is restore the definition of marriage to protect the rest of Californians who also have a stake in marriage: children and their mothers and fathers.

(LiMandri is general counsel for the National Organization for Marriage – California. He was also the lead attorney in the successful efforts to save the Mount Soledad cross.)

http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20081019/news_lz1e19limandr.html