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## **New York State Senate should pass same-sex marriage bill**

**By The Post-Standard Editorial Board**

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In the middle of his speech to the Legislature on the state's fiscal crisis Monday, Gov. Paterson took a moment to push for another priority he wants lawmakers to address in their special session today: same-sex marriage.

Some question the wisdom of diluting the special legislative session with other matters, arguing that the sole focus should be on pulling the state out of its dire economic straits. There is certainly merit in that argument. And there are the familiar charges of politics: If the governor succeeds in bringing the same-sex marriage issue to a vote, he will put a core group of voters solidly in his corner.

The governor may indeed be politicking. But, again, he is also doing what is right. In his speech Monday, he correctly framed the bill legalizing same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue by using the old civil rights adage, "Justice delayed is justice denied."

If one believes homosexuality is not a choice, then the question of same-sex marriage becomes a civil rights issue. Civil marriage is a right that all other New Yorkers enjoy. The bill that has been passed by the Assembly and could be before the Senate today would guarantee access to civil marriage; it would not require any religious marriage ceremonies.

If the bill gets to the floor today, senators should vote to keep New York moving forward by extending an important right to citizens who fully deserve it.

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