

June 8, 2009

Dear Senator:

We would like to take this opportunity to respectfully reiterate our strong support of marriage equality.

The organized labor movement in this state has long been on record in its firm belief that marriage equality is a labor issue, in that it provides equal rights to all working men and women, regardless of sexual orientation. Our members who are lesbian and gay must be entitled to the same right to marriage as their co-workers.

In fact, at its Constitutional Convention last year, the delegates and affiliated unions of the New York State AFL-CIO unanimously passed a resolution calling upon the legislature and Governor to enact a law which provides marriage equality for all citizens. In addition, SEIU has been on record in favor of marriage equality since 2004.

The organized labor movement of this state believes the denial of marriage equality hurts not just individuals, but also family members, neighbors and co-workers who care about the well-being of same-sex couples and the children they care for.

While domestic partnership and civil union laws bring welcome recognition to such families, there is no substitute for marriage. No legal mechanism for protecting families is as widely accepted or has as clear legal precedent and meaning as does marriage. Denying access to marriage for loving, committed same-sex couples discriminates against them and relegates them to second-class citizenship.

As you know, public discussion on this important issue has intensified. As such, the undersigned feel that the time for action, and passage, of marriage equality legislation is now.

The organized labor movement in this state would like to respectfully reiterate its strong support and commitment to equal rights for all working men and women. And in particular, we urge

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you to pass legislation in this session, that will allow loving, committed same-sex couples to have equal access to legal marriage.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



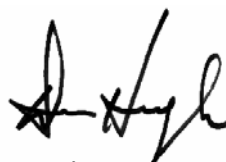
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