

The 2012 Democratic Party of Virginia State Convention Supports Marriage Equality

Background

The U.S. Supreme Court recognized in its 1967 Loving v. Virginia decision that civil marriage is one of the basic civil rights fundamental to our very existence and survival and one of the vital personal rights essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness.

Marriage equality is about civil marriage, not religious marriage, and civil unions and domestic partnerships can never be a substitute for full and equal marriage.

Marriage is a powerful and important affirmation of love and commitment, a source of social support and recognition, and the legal protections which are invaluable to the safety and security of every family.

All couples in loving and committed relationships should be given the opportunity to create stronger and more successful families through civil marriage.

The continued refusal to deny same sex partners the ability to enjoy the benefits, rights and responsibilities of a legally recognized civil marriage union is tantamount to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.

Republicans in Washington and Richmond have continually discriminated against members of the LGBT Community, and in the Republican-controlled Virginia House of Delegates have recently gone so far as to deny a judgeship to a well qualified, well-respected, long-serving Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney, simply because of his sexual orientation.

Such discrimination is inconsistent with the Democratic Party's commitment to equal rights and opportunities for all people.

The Democratic Party has a noble history of fighting for the human and civil rights of all people.

The time has come for the Party to hold true to this record and add to its legacy by taking a stand in support of the freedom to marry for all loving and committed couples.

Action

The Democratic Party of Virginia State Convention:

1. Commends President Obama and Vice President Biden and our Virginia Congressional delegation for their great understanding of and support for marriage equality; and
2. Calls upon the Democratic Party of Virginia to reaffirm the freedom to marry and encourages the 2012 National Democratic Party Platform to include the following language:

The Democratic Party supports the full inclusion of all families in the life of our nation, with equal respect, responsibility, and protection under the law, including the freedom to marry. Government has no business putting barriers in the path of people seeking to care for their family members, particularly in challenging economic times. We support the Respect for Marriage Act and the overturning of the federal so-called "Defense of Marriage Act," and oppose discriminatory constitutional amendments and other attempts to deny the freedom to marry to loving and committed same-sex couples.