



STATEMENT

Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty

The Passage of the "Respect for Marriage Act"

"The dictum is evidenced again that "Government is not the solution to a problem; it is the problem." Yesterday, the US Senate's passage of H.R. 8404, the misleadingly titled "Respect for Marriage Act," is a blow to religious freedom in ways that, sadly, we will see and experience in the coming days if, and it seems more likely than not, it becomes law next week. In a time when family breakdown is the key factor in so much social brokenness and unrest, what did the government do? They redefined family, made children even more vulnerable to the ravages of sexual libertinism, and made any moral call to honor and reach for the uniqueness of the trinity of civility in society, family as "Father-Mother-Child," a potential legal threat to the empire. In taking sides of what should be a robust, enduring debate on what a "healthy relationship" is, and what the "institution of family" is, the Senate just passed a law that pits American citizens against one another concerning issues of conscience in which they are free to disagree. As we have argued both to our elected officials and to you, God's "2 Kingdom citizens" in this country, this is bad law for everyone, even the ones that it favors. Why? The government doesn't "grant rights." And, it surely doesn't "grant relationships." When it starts to do that, all of our freedoms are doomed to be turned into servitude to a compassless, amoral (even immoral) bureaucracy which honors those who have the power to subjugate others. At a time when we should be encouraging more "Father-Mother-Child" families for the sake of our culture, our government further undermined the very fragile foundation of the family. In the end, this law will likely cause hurt even to those it intends to favor.

In our work on the Hill, we are thankful for the voices that tried to mitigate, even stop this legislation. In our work on the "Values Action Team" of the Senate, we supported the work (and the amendments) of Senators Lee, Lankford and Rubio. Each of them offered amendments intended to protect the deeply held religious convictions of organizations like our beloved Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (LCMS). Sadly, all of them were defeated and the 12 GOP Senators who supported this bill opted to expose the Church and her schools to litigation rather than protection.

No nation can survive the dissolution of the family (Honor your Father and your Mother that it may be well with you, Ephesians 6:2-3). In a time when simple, foundational truths like the biological uniqueness of male and female, is obscured and even ridiculed, marriage was surely next. The Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty (LCRL) agrees with "Focus on the Family's" statement concerning yesterday's passage of H.R. 8404, "It's inconceivable why a majority of our leaders would deliberately vote to erode the very institution that holds the answer to a thriving country and culture. Children desperately need mothers and fathers, and today's vote seriously undercuts and ignores what should be a top legislative priority."

And, even more to the point, let us always remember that God is in control and He commands that we remain faithful to His teachings. Let us be diligent in training up our children and grandchildren to be His lights in a world of darkness. Let us speak winsomely in the public square about the place of "Father Mother-Child" in today's society. Let us work while there is light for the protection of inalienable rights - a gift of God, not the state.