



PRESS RELEASE

**Contact: Jerry Cox
Office: 501-375-7000
Cell: 501-912-6600**

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Gay Activists Ask Court to Strike Arkansas' Marriage Amendment

LITTLE ROCK – On Wednesday, Family Council President Jerry Cox released a statement regarding a lawsuit filed in Pulaski County Circuit Court to overturn the Amendment 83 to the Arkansas Constitution defining marriage as the union of one man to one woman.

“In 2004, Arkansas voters were asked whether or not they wanted to define marriage in the State of Arkansas as the union of one man and one woman,” Cox said. “Seventy-five percent of voters said that’s how they wanted to define it. Nearly a decade has passed, and now a group has filed a lawsuit to strike down the marriage amendment voters passed in that election.”

Cox said this lawsuit flies in the face of democracy. “The Arkansas Marriage Amendment is about as democratic a measure as you can get. Nearly one in ten adults in Arkansas signed the petition to let Arkansans vote on the issue. Hundreds of volunteers mobilized to gather those signatures. Over three-quarters of a million voters voted to make marriage the union of one man and one woman. I cannot find a single ballot issue that passed by a wider margin in recent history. This lawsuit is an attempt to disenfranchise those hundreds of thousands of voters.”

Cox said he believes the lawsuit has very little substance. “Looking at what was filed yesterday, it looks like the plaintiffs are simply throwing a bunch of arguments at Amendment 83, hoping something sticks. They’re asserting that Amendment 83 is somehow inconsistent with the rest of the Arkansas Constitution. As a former Government teacher, I can tell you that’s virtually impossible. If a constitutional amendment is somehow ‘inconsistent’ with the rest of the constitution, the amendment wins out.”

Cox said he believes this lawsuit is being spurred by the last week’s Supreme Court ruling that struck a section of the federal Defense of Marriage Act. “Gay activists were betting on a landmark victory before the Supreme Court last week. They didn’t get it. Instead they got a partial victory and a partial defeat, with the court striking a portion of DOMA and refusing to weigh in on state marriage amendments as a whole. They’ve had some victories with state courts in California and elsewhere, though, so it’s no surprise they would turn to state court for a change.”

Cox said his organization will continue monitoring any developments related to marriage in Arkansas.

Family Council is an organization of over 10,000 families and churches throughout Arkansas with a mission of promoting, protecting, and strengthening traditional family values.

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