

Testimony of Megan E. McCabe, MD  
Baltimore City  
443-386-9888  
House Judiciary Committee  
January 31, 2006  
House Bill 48 – Maryland's Marriage Protection Act  
OPPOSE

Testimony of Megan E. McCabe, MD  
House Judiciary Committee  
January 31, 2006  
House Bill 48 – Maryland's Marriage Protection Act  
OPPOSE

Good afternoon Mr. Chairman and members of the Judiciary Committee. It's good to be here to speak out against House Bill 48 today, especially with Delegate Anderson, who serves my district, sitting on the committee.

My name is Dr. Megan McCabe. I am a pediatrician who specializes in pediatric intensive care; I care exclusively for children who are facing life-threatening illness or injury. Becoming a pediatrician requires a commitment to the health and safety of all children. That is why I am here to testify today.

The supporters of House Bill 48 claim that amending the Maryland constitution will somehow help to protect and support children by denying legal recognition of their families. My experience strongly and directly counteracts this claim, as does a large internationally respected body of pediatric research.

In my practice I have encountered hundreds of families facing their worst nightmare—one of their beloved children is critically ill or injured. I am called to provide emergency transport for children from all corners of the state. Without fail, the people who love that child beg for my assurance that we will do everything we can to care for their baby as we load them into the emergency transport helicopter. Even when the child is nearly an adult, for example 17 years old and twice my size, they are still someone's baby.

Imagine a child who has been injured in a car accident. The parent driving the car has been taken to Shock-Trauma and the child has been taken to a children's hospital. For a heterosexual couple, the healthy parent could immediately obtain information about the child, answer questions for the medical team and provide comfort to their child. For a same-sex couple, the healthy parent would likely be denied access to and information about the child, the medical team would be denied potentially vital information and the child would be denied the comfort of a parent at an extremely frightening time. No child has ever cried for the comfort of their doctor or nurse when they are scared or hurting. They want the people who have loved and raised them. It may be a mommy and a daddy, two mommies or daddies, or a single parent; it may be grandparents, aunts and uncles or even cousins.

Passing an amendment that specifically discriminates against one type of family will only serve to exacerbate the already profound distress of families facing the kinds of situations I see everyday. Families with same-sex parents already face severe obstacles to securing the legal benefits and stability available to other two-parent families.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (the oldest and most highly regarded professional society of pediatricians) has carefully reviewed studies performed over the past twenty years on children of same-sex couples and states that children raised by "gay or lesbian parents fare as well in emotional, cognitive, social and sexual functioning as do

Testimony of Megan E. McCabe, MD  
House Judiciary Committee  
January 31, 2006  
House Bill 48 – Maryland's Marriage Protection Act  
OPPOSE

children whose parents are heterosexual.” Based on this scientific data the American Academy of Pediatrics, along with multiple other professional organizations such as the American Academy of Family Physicians, opposes legislation designed to bar same-sex parents from creating families that are protected by legal, financial, and social structures.

I commend the committee for prioritizing the welfare of Maryland's children. As a pediatrician I believe that the health and well-being of Maryland's children is best promoted by creating a society that supports their families. I also believe that changing the state constitution to forever deny such protections to thousands of children from families headed by same-sex couples would do much to undermine the health and well-being of those children. There are many ways to make children's lives happier, healthier, and safer; House Bill 48 is not one of them.