



PRESS ADVISORY - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MARRIAGE EQUALITY USA URGES DEFEAT OF NORTH CAROLINA ANTI-GAY INITIATIVE

Media Contacts:

Stuart Gaffney, Media Director, (415) 378 3259, stuartjohn@marriageequality.org
John Lewis, Legal Analyst, (415) 377 7924, stuartjohn@marriageequality.org

San Francisco: Marriage Equality USA decries the North Carolina State Legislature's action today putting the freedom to marry of loving, committed same-sex couples up for a popular vote on the May 2012 statewide ballot.

"This initiative is a terribly harmful measure that would not only exclude loving, committed same-sex couples from marriage in North Carolina, but would forever prohibit civil unions or domestic partnerships, and take away domestic partner rights and benefits that same-sex couples in cities like Durham, Asheville, and Greensboro have today," said Marriage Equality USA Legal Director John Lewis.

"To have your relationship become the subject of an anti-gay political campaign designed to scare voters feels like a punch in the gut," said Stuart Gaffney, Marriage Equality USA's Media Director. "This divisive initiative hurts real families. Same-sex couples and LGBT people are not political footballs to be tossed around in an election year. We are human beings that deserve to be treated with dignity and to have respect and protection for our relationships. Sadly, this political campaign wants to deny us that basic dignity."

"I am heartened that a diverse, growing coalition including the NAACP, Facebook Co-Founder Chris Hughes, Country Singer Chely Wright, and Equality North Carolina are coming together to fight this measure, which the latest polling shows that 55% of North Carolinians oppose. In the face of this adversity, same-sex couples, lesbian and gay people, and our friends and families will stand up for our lives and our families and defeat this initiative," stated Lewis.

Founded in 2000, Marriage Equality USA® is a national grassroots organization whose mission is to secure legally-recognized civil marriage equality for all, at the federal and state level, without regard to gender identity or sexual orientation. For more information go to www.marriageequality.org. Follow us on Twitter @meusa. Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/marriageequalityusa.