

MCC on same-sex marriage: 'Maryland is not New York'

Responding to a newly launched effort to pass same-sex marriage in Maryland, the Maryland Catholic Conference issued a July 12 statement noting that the "successful coalition that upheld the time-honored definition of marriage in Maryland remains intact and will continue to be involved in upholding marriage in our state."

A statewide coalition of groups including Equality Maryland, Progressive Maryland, SEIU, CWA, the ACLU, the Human Rights Campaign, Freedom to Marry and others announced the launch of "Marylanders for Marriage Equality" July 12. It plans to push for the legalization of same-sex marriage.

While same-sex marriage advocates pointed to the recent passage of gay marriage in New York as a model for Maryland, the MCC emphasized that "Maryland is not New York."

"During the 2011 session, Maryland lawmakers chose not to redefine marriage because they listened to their Maryland constituents and stood by their deeply-held moral convictions," the MCC statement said. "While the New York legislature may have taken a different course, they did so knowing the people of New York - unlike Maryland - have no recourse to taking a law redefining marriage to a statewide vote."

The MCC said it will continue to urge all sides and groups to discuss and debate the issue "with respect, recognizing that we are all children of God."

"This is not a partisan issue," the statement said, "It is a foundational issue to our society. Mothers and fathers are not interchangeable. Government's interest in marriage has been to promote the procreation of children, protect the best method of raising children and therefore protect society for future generations."