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September 13, 2005

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Ms. Amy J. Baker, Coordinator
Office of Economic &
Demographic Research
Room 576 Claude Pepper Building
111 W. Madison Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1400

Dear Ms. Baker:

I am writing in response to your letter written on behalf of the principals of the Financial Impact Estimating Conference (FIEC) requesting information regarding the probable economic impact of the ballot initiative, the Florida Marriage Protection Act which is sponsored by the political committee, Florida4Marriage.org.

The Florida4Marriage.org constitutional initiative reads as follows:

“Inasmuch as marriage is the legal union of only one man and one woman as husband and wife, no other legal union that is treated as marriage or the substantial equivalent thereof shall be valid or recognized.”

The impact of the proposed amendment language is virtually identical to the current of the current Florida Statute 741.212 entitled “Marriages between persons of the same sex” That statutory provision reads:

(1) Marriages between persons of the same sex entered into in any jurisdiction, whether within or outside the State of Florida, the United States, or any other jurisdiction, either domestic or foreign, or any other place or location, or relationships between persons of the same sex which are treated as marriages in any jurisdiction, whether within or outside the State of Florida, the United States, or any other jurisdiction, either domestic or foreign, or any other place or location, are not recognized for any purpose in this state.

(2) The state, its agencies, and its political subdivisions may not give effect to any public act, record, or judicial proceeding of any state, territory, possession, or tribe of the United States or of any other jurisdiction, either domestic or foreign, or any other place or location respecting either a marriage or relationship not recognized under subsection (1) or a claim arising from such a marriage or relationship.

(3) For purposes of interpreting any state statute or rule, the term "marriage" means only a legal union between one man and one woman as husband and wife, and the term "spouse" applies only to a member of such a union.

History.--s. 1, ch. 97-268.

While the proposed amendment's language is much shorter and succinct, the effect and intent is the same and merely seeks to constitutionally protect marriage in the same way that Florida's law does.

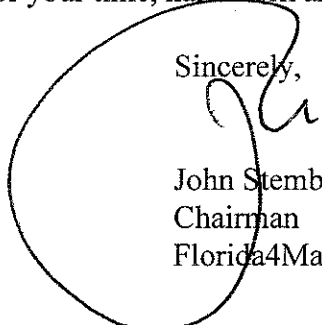
I am enclosing the committee bill analysis prepared in March of 1997, the year section 741.212 Florida's law was adopted. The analysis is of little assistance because it only attempts to explore the financial impact of the bill's *failure to pass* and not the impact of the bill actually passing.

In formulating an opinion on this matter I have consulted with both policy experts and constitutional law experts in addition to doing independent research. In summary, it is our position that there will be no financial impact through Florida4Marriage.org citizen's initiative being incorporated into the Florida Constitution as it merely seeks to establish existing law into the state charter.

I would ask as a courtesy that you please give my office notice 1) If there are further questions; 2) If the conference feels that more research is needed; or 3) If there are other groups or conference principles who present information in opposition to our position.

Thank you very much for your time, hard work and efforts in this matter.

Sincerely,



John Stemberger
Chairman
Florida4Marriage.org

STJ/jts

Enclosure: 1997 Bill Analysis & Economic Impact Statement on then CS/HB 147