

# Senate Joint Memorial 3

Sponsored by Senator DECKERT (at the request of Libertarian Party of Oregon)

## SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure **as introduced**.

Urges Congress to enact legislation to establish civil unions as legal equivalent of marriage and extend to couples who have entered into civil unions same rights, benefits and responsibilities under federal law as are extended to couples who are married.

## JOINT MEMORIAL

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2 To the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress as-  
3 sembled:

4 We, your memorialists, the Seventy-third Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon, in legis-  
5 lative session assembled, respectfully represent as follows:

6 Whereas marriage is acknowledged by many as a religious sacrament, and religious institutions  
7 should control the nature and dispensation of their marriage sacraments; and

8 Whereas government's definition of marriage can conflict with the marriage sacraments as de-  
9 fined and practiced by religious institutions; and

10 Whereas government must concern itself with establishing a legal framework within which  
11 couples entering into committed relationships may obtain legal and contractual rights, benefits and  
12 responsibilities; and

13 Whereas current state and federal laws create barriers to achieving legal equity between mar-  
14 riages and civil unions and between opposite-sex couples and same-sex couples; and

15 Whereas government could establish, in lieu of marriage, civil unions as the legal equivalent of  
16 marriage, conferring the legal and contractual rights, benefits and responsibilities of marriage to all  
17 committed couples who lawfully entered into civil unions; and

18 Whereas a marriage sanctified by a religious institution would continue to be recognized by the  
19 institution and could be granted, denied, governed, annulled or ended by the institution as the in-  
20 stitution saw fit; and

21 Whereas the Oregon Legislative Assembly cannot end the legal inequities faced by committed  
22 couples who may not legally marry until federal law, which provides legal and contractual rights,  
23 benefits and responsibilities based on marital status, is reformed; now, therefore,

24 **Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

25 That we, the members of the Seventy-third Legislative Assembly, respectfully urge the Congress  
26 of the United States to enact legislation to establish civil unions as the legal equivalent of marriage  
27 and extend to couples who have entered into civil unions the same rights, benefits and responsibil-  
28 ities under federal law that are extended to couples who are married; and be it further

29 Resolved, That a copy of this memorial shall be sent to each member of the Oregon Congres-  
30 sional Delegation.

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**NOTE:** Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter [*italic and bracketed*] is existing law to be omitted.  
New sections are in **boldfaced** type.