



**Prepared Remarks by Anthony J. Motley
Candidate for City Council At-Large**

November 3, 2009

We Live in America

Over the past months, I have been interviewed and questioned by newspaper reporters, TV and radio commentators, leaders of both clergy groups as well as the gay and lesbian community. Senior citizens, younger and older couples, and single people have asked my position on same sex marriage. They want to know my opinion of the city council... ruling on same sex legislation versus putting the issue before the voting public of the District of Columbia. It's been said that this matter cuts to the core fundamental beliefs of people and challenges the institution of marriage.

Because of these important questions, I decided to hold this press conference today in order to share my views. However, the truth is that my campaign is better prepared to face the issues of education reform; public safety; juvenile and youth violence; employment & training; homelessness and poverty; income security for retirees; affordable housing; transparency with accountability and ethical behavior in government, healthcare for all and solutions to the HIV/AIDS epidemic vexing DC.

The job of the D.C. City Council is to pass and oversee enforcement of laws that benefit and protect residents and visitors. Further, these laws should not add restrictive provisions that impede day-to-day life, or tear at the delicate and multi-faceted balance of core fundamental and religious practices evidenced in DC's multi-cultural society. I believe the citizens should have more than a symbolic voice such as testifying at hearings but should have a practical, legally binding and defensible vote on matters impacting all residents.

For the City Council to deny the people the opportunity to vote their choice on an issue such as marriage appears to be insensitive to core beliefs. It matters not whether the people are acculturated by practice as Hindu or Jew, Muslim or Buddhist, Christian or Native American, elected officials should not oppose their fundamental human rights to practice marriage beliefs without political tampering.

In the hearts and minds of a significant number of DC residents, they feel a personal affront and challenge to the authenticity of their sacred oaths taken as husbands and wives. Their faith-based integrity and ethical foundation is at stake and represents a life & death threat to the security of their relationship with their God as they live, practice and believe.



Contrary to the statement of one Council member, I don't think "...the people of the District of Columbia are haters". Nor do I believe that allowing the voters to decide on Same-Sex marriage will "breed fear". Frankly speaking, I simply do not think the decision regarding same-sex marriage should be upheld by the Council and Mayor. There are too many risks and too much precious human capital is at stake.

For the record, D.C. has written and passed some of the strongest and most far reaching "domestic partnership" and "civil union" laws in the country. All of which I support. Because D.C. Is the Capitol of the United States, we might aspire to be viewed as leaders for the nation. However, with regard to same-sex marriage, 29 states have legislated a "constitutional" ban restricting marriage to one man and one woman. Meanwhile, another 19 states impose laws (though not by constitution) banning gay and lesbian marriage while limiting lawful marriage to one man and one woman. Only 4 states permit gay marriage. Regardless of the eventual outcome, DC advocates for the right to vote on this issue, should not be denied their democratic and US Constitutional rights. Moreover, the Council should be more focused on gaining full voting rights for D.C. in the U.S. Congress as well as Statehood which would require the support of the other states.

The District of Columbia, the city I love is also the Capitol of the United States. It is a city of "Magnificent Monuments and broad ranging intentions". The city leaders have at times endeavored to make DC the bright shining light on the hill seeking to boldly shine its light through the clear lens of freedom and democracy. Over the years, the Nation's Capitol has opened it's gates to non-violent civil disobedience demonstrations and protests. We witnessed the Historic 1963 interracial Freedom March on Washington, and the birth of Resurrection City on the Mall, the Viet-Nam anti-war protests, the "Code Pink", Women/Mothers Against the Iraq War, the Million Man March and Rally in support of repentance and recommitment to personal responsibility and family strengthening values, the Millions More Movement and others. Personally, during the presidential administration of George W. Bush, I joined with others in prayer in front of the White House, protesting the deployment of troops to fight unjust wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Recently, I worked in support of President Barack Obama because he promised "...his intention to bring the war weary troops home".

This wonderful city symbolizes the willingness of Americans to fight for their God given rights to freedom, justice, self-expression and equality. Its undaunted spirit of freedom will not tolerate hatred, bigotry or discrimination in any form. Nor will provincial thinking be allowed to impede the momentum of the progressive movement that is steering D.C. toward emergence as a true "World Class" city, open to all people.

In 1996, a Federal law was passed entitled the "Defense of Marriage Act" or DOMA. DOMA states: 1) No state (or other political



subdivision within the United States) needs to treat a relationship between persons of the same sex as a marriage, even if the relationship is considered a marriage in another state.

2) The Federal government defines marriage as a legal union exclusively between one man and one woman. This bill was passed in the US Congress by a vote of 85-14 in the Senate and a vote of 342-67 in the House of Representatives and was signed into law by President Bill Clinton on September 21, 1996. For the well informed, D.C. is known as the Federal City of the United States.

On Friday October 30, 2009 while handling an unrelated matter in the D.C. City Council, Councilmember David Catania stated "...the Federal law and the D.C. Home Rule Charter takes precedence over District Law and Policies when there is a conflict or challenge in that law or policy. Furthermore, a clause in the District's Human Rights Law states "Nothing in this chapter (law) shall be construed to supersede any Federal rule, regulation or act". In Dean vs. District of Columbia, a D.C. Court of appeals ruled "...that the Human Rights Act did not apply because "Family Law" covers a husband and wife". Same-sex supporters want to say that the Dean decision no longer applies because the D.C. Council has made many laws "gender neutral" since 1995. However, we are mindful that Councilmember Catania stated" ...when there is a conflict or challenge in the D.C. Law or policy, then the Federal law or Act takes precedent over the D.C. Law. Additionally, the D.C. Marriage Equality bill exposes churches etal, that do not accommodate gays and lesbians, in other ways than performance of marriage ceremonies (such as rental of space etc), to be sued. I say to the Council, enforce the existing Federal Laws. The Defense of Marriage Act, DOMA supercedes all DC laws, and policies regarding marriage. Moreover, if there is any question about the wishes of the citizens of DC, put the question to a vote. Either way, the Federal Law does not change.

REGARDING MY PERSONAL and FAITH BELIEF on same-sex Marriage or marriage equality:

Granted, much has changed on the political landscape since passage of the Defense of Marriage Act - DOMA in 1996. However, one thing has not changed, and that is the Word of God. The Bible says "the Word of God is immutable and unchanging. In 1987, I was licensed to preach the Gospel in the District of Columbia. In 1989, I was ordained by the Missionary Baptist Minister's Conference of Washington DC and vicinity as a Baptist Minister. I am licensed to perform weddings, funerals and the sacraments of the church. Since 1989 I have performed those obligations and duties with the reverence required of them all. In respect of marriage, I have counseled many couples and performed their marriages with no trepidation or regrets. I have also counseled those opting for divorce from one another and I have counseled grieving survivors following loss of a husband or wife to death. When I was divorced and going through my valley experience, I sat down from ministry for five years until my pastor brought me back up to preach.



I have been involved in HIV/AIDS ministry since 1986 on many different levels in our city. I was led into this ministry by a dear friend of mind, Mr. Philip Pannell, a long time DC civic and social activist and gay rights advocate. I embraced the challenges and opportunities of this ministry while a student at the Howard University School of Divinity at a time, when other members of the Clergy were not as accepting. I ministered unfailingly to members of the gay community, providing housing, clothing, food and medicine when they fell short supplying their own needs. I visited hospitals and hospices and held them in my arms when they were dying. I consoled their families and significant others, and performed their funerals. I have members of my family who are gay and have lost some to HIV/AIDS. Through it all, I was blessed to help establish an HIV/AIDS service organization in D.C.

At the time when the same-sex marriage and marriage equality legislation was introduced in DC to recognize these marriages from other states, there was a rally in Freedom Plaza opposing the legislation. I was in attendance and witnessed vitriolic and demonizing language directed against the gay and lesbian community. In response, I organized and convened a meeting inside the John A. Wilson building between leaders of the Missionary Baptist Minister's Conference of Washington, DC and Vicinity and the Gay & Lesbian community in order to facilitate a forum for the formation of a civil dialogue among the members of the two groups. Out of the meeting emerged three points of agreement: 1) There would be no hateful language displayed; 2) there would be mutual respect despite disagreement on the issues and agreement to dispense with hostility and not be "disagreeable". and 3) there would be continued on-going conversation between the two groups in order to clarify important intersecting matters.

While I have heard some very compelling philosophical and ideological arguments supporting legalization of same-sex marriage in D.C., I have not heard any theological arguments that would convince me to alter my core belief that marriage should be between a man and a woman, a husband and a wife. What is the source of this belief? Where does it come from? It is my understanding that the institution of marriage predates Jesus and Christianity. In the Pentateuch (from the Greek meaning five: referring to the first five books of the Bible), it says that "...a man shall leave his mother and father and cleave to his wife and the two shall become one flesh." Genesis 2:24 Why did God say "a husband and wife? In my opinion, they represent opposites and were ordered by God to procreate and fill the earth with other human beings which became the families of man. This fulfilled God's promise to Abraham to become the father of nation's and married Sarah. In Matthew 19:4-5, in response to questioning by the Pharisees (a self-righteous ruling class of hypocritical Jewish leaders) regarding matters of marriage and that of husbands and wives..."Jesus said, have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning (Adam & Eve) made them male and female, and said, for



this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife...".

Therefore, I stand on that belief and remain today reinforced in my belief that marriage should be between a man and woman, a husband and a wife. I thank God that we live in America and I am entitled to my belief without fear of being demonized and it be said that I am a hater. Equally so, I believe that others are entitled to express their beliefs and opinions without fear of being demonized. I implore everyone, on both sides of the issue, to debate the issues and not one another. I will not participate in divisive and unproductive discourse. It is mindless, leads us constructively no where while solving nothing. We live in America and are all entitled to our differing opinions.

Thank you, God Bless You, and God Bless America and the District of Columbia.

Anthony J. Motley, BA., M.Div.

4409 South Capitol Street, SW, Washington, DC 20032
(202) 373-0663 voice, (202) 373-5189 fax
www.motley2010.com

paid for by Motley 2010 Committee, Steve Baker, Treasurer