

United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510-1504

January 3, 2013

Dear Friend,

I don't often write to express my position on issues before the General Assembly. But as a citizen of this Land of Lincoln I want to be clearly on record in regard to an issue of historic importance.

I believe those whom God has brought to this Earth with a different sexual orientation and who seek a loving relationship in the eyes of the law should be given that opportunity.

I urge you to vote for Marriage Equality in Illinois so that our state can be part of the emerging national consensus on this issue of justice.

In America every religion has a right to establish standards for its members and to express its position on moral issues for consideration by its faithful and others. This law would not change that, and no religion, including my own Catholic faith, would be mandated to bless same-sex marriages.

Two years ago at the ceremony where President Obama signed the law repealing "don't ask, don't tell," a Jewish Rabbi gave a memorable invocation. He said when you look into the eyes of another if you don't see the face of God at least see the face of another human being.

Every generation is given a chance to put an end to some form of discrimination in America. As you consider this historic vote, I hope you will reflect on those you will meet after it is cast. An affirmative vote will give you a chance to look into the eyes of those who have faced discrimination throughout their lives and tell them that you voted to affirm their rights under the law.

My own views on this issue have evolved over the years, and as I reflect on my support for marriage equality, I have concluded that ending this discrimination is consistent with the evolution of civil rights in our democracy – a process served so nobly by a former member of the Illinois General Assembly, Abraham Lincoln.

Thank you for your service to our state.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin