

111TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# S. 2980

To protect the democratic process and the right of the people of the District of Columbia to define marriage.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

FEBRUARY 2, 2010

Mr. BENNETT (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. VITTER, Mr. ENZI, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. INHOFE, Mr. ROBERTS, and Mr. HATCH) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

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## A BILL

To protect the democratic process and the right of the people of the District of Columbia to define marriage.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 Congress finds that—

5 (1) a broad coalition of residents of the District  
6 of Columbia petitioned for an initiative in accord-  
7 ance with the District of Columbia Home Rule Act  
8 to establish that “only marriage between a man and

1 a woman is valid or recognized in the District of Co-  
2 lumbia”;

3 (2) this petition anticipated the Council of the  
4 District of Columbia’s passage of an Act legalizing  
5 same-sex marriage;

6 (3) the unelected District of Columbia Board of  
7 Elections and Ethics and the unelected District of  
8 Columbia Superior Court thwarted the residents’ ini-  
9 tiative effort to define marriage democratically, hold-  
10 ing that the initiative amounted to discrimination  
11 prohibited by the District of Columbia Human  
12 Rights Act; and

13 (4) the definition of marriage affects every per-  
14 son and should be debated openly and democrat-  
15 ically.

16 **SEC. 2. REFERENDUM OR INITIATIVE REQUIREMENT.**

17 Notwithstanding any other provision of law, including  
18 the District of Columbia Human Rights Act, the govern-  
19 ment of the District of Columbia shall not issue a mar-  
20 riage license to any couple of the same sex until the people  
21 of the District of Columbia have the opportunity to hold  
22 a referendum or initiative on the question of whether the  
23 District of Columbia should issue same-sex marriage li-  
24 censes.

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