

While not everyone who enters into marriage desires children or is able to have children, the context of their marriage is an example of how a man and a woman should live together in a way where children could be raised and cared for. We all know kids are observant and curious, and they watch how friends, neighbors and relatives live. And most children grow up mimicking the behaviors observed from adults.

So while two people of the same sex may express love for one another, it does not mean that the State has an obligation or duty to grant them marital status. Marriage is a privilege the State should protect, but it is not a right for same-sex partners, multiple partners, or any configuration of people and animals that express love for one another.

Fighting to protect marriage in America will likely be a very long and difficult process, but so is the struggle for a lot of worthy things in this country. Women fought for decades before they were finally allowed to vote. The struggle for slaves to become free and ultimately to have their full civil rights recognized was a terribly long process. But we must not give up. It is my hope that more and more Americans will realize the significance this issue has for all of us as Americans. I hope that as the debate continues on the issue of marriage we will have a growing concern for who this affects most: our children.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE VOTER PROTECTION ACT OF 2004

**HON. ELIJAH E. CUMMINGS**

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 7, 2004*

Mr. CUMMINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Voter Protection Act of 2004. This bill would allow criminal prosecution of any individual, group, or organization that tries to mislead, intimidate, misrepresent or otherwise interfere with anyone exercising the right to vote. It would impose a fine, imprisonment for up to one year, or both against violators. I introduce this bill, because as the presidential election fast approaches, it is evident that there are concerted efforts to mislead or intimidate voters across the country, especially minority voters.

A recent report entitled *The Long Shadow of Jim Crow: Voter Intimidation and Suppression in America Today*, (September 2004), coauthored by the People for the American Way Foundation and the NAACP, highlights efforts to intimidate and suppress minority voters around the country. It contains many recent egregious examples during this election cycle that illustrate the necessity for this legislation:

In July 2004, Kentucky Black Republican officials joined to ask their State GOP party chairman to reject plans to place "vote challengers" in African American precincts during the upcoming election. (Source: *Louisville Courier-Journal*, 8/3/04).

Just this summer, a Member of the Michigan State Legislature, Representative John Pappageorge, was quoted as saying, "If we do not suppress the Detroit vote, we're going to have a tough time this election." Mr. Speaker, you may not be aware, but African-Americans comprise 83 percent of Detroit's population. (Source: *Detroit Free Press*).

In South Dakota's June 2004 primary, Native American voters were prevented from voting after they were asked for identification, which they are not required to present under state and federal laws.

In 2004 in Texas, students at Prairie View A&M once again are suing for the right to register to vote in Waller County—after being threatened with criminal prosecution by the district attorney. In fact, an earlier controversy had led to a lawsuit and a 1978 federal court order prohibiting the local registrar from treating Prairie View students differently from other county voters. (Source: *Houston Chronicle*, 2/6/04).

These are glaring examples that demonstrate that the problems surrounding the 2000 presidential election in Florida were not a fluke, but symptomatic of a larger nationwide problem.

I cite one other recent example from the press.

The *New York Times* recently reported that police officers visited the homes of elderly African Americans in Orlando, Florida flaunting their guns and questioning them about their legal voter registration activities.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I feel compelled to cite a not so long ago example of attempts to mislead voters in my own district:

In Baltimore, Maryland, in the 2002 election, anonymous fliers were posted in several predominantly Black neighborhoods with the heading "URGENT NOTICE". The flier listed the wrong date for Election Day and warned that parking tickets and overdue rent should be paid before voting. (Source: *Baltimore Sun*, 11/6/02).

I think my colleagues can see the pattern of suppression, misrepresentation and intimidation, especially in "high stakes" elections—it is both obvious and atrocious.

Mr. Speaker, as the men and women of all backgrounds in our armed services fight abroad to promote democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is absolutely unconscionable and unpatriotic to allow illegal voter suppression activity to persist in our own country. Yet it does. Allowing such improprieties to continue—by those who actively seek to hinder or to deny altogether certain individuals' ability to vote—goes against the fundamental tenets of fairness and freedom woven into the fabric of our Nation.

Mr. Speaker, we are now 26 days away from what will be one of the most decisive elections of our lifetime. In order to ensure every person's "right to vote," voter intimidation and interference must be stopped.

Accordingly, we must combat these tactics by ensuring that there are sufficient repercussions—and that these individuals are held accountable for their actions. The Voter Protection Act of 2004 will help to ensure this accountability. It would do so by imposing criminal penalties and fines for anyone or group that engages in fraudulent tactics, including distributing fliers or calling potential voters with misinformation, or any other such attempts to mislead or intimidate voters.

Mr. Speaker, I stand before you, 40 years after the passage of the Voting Rights Act, asking that the Congress ensure that we not repeat the mistakes of the past, but indeed write a new page in history. I ask that we send a message to this country's citizens that they will be free to vote. I ask that we send a message to those so inclined that misleading, sup-

pressing and intimidating voters is wrong and cannot continue. The Voter Protection Act of 2004 will help to assure Americans of the unencumbered right to vote.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, when the Constitution of the United States was originally adopted in 1788, many of us would have been ineligible to vote. Thankfully, there were people in this country who resisted against that injustice—in fact, died to correct it. The Voter Protection Act of 2004 will continue this tradition of ensuring that every vote is precious and protected.

If Congress passes this legislation, we will demonstrate to the Nation and to the world that America does not tolerate any impositions on the sacred privilege of voting. I urge all of my colleagues to join me by co-sponsoring this legislation.

#### PAYING TRIBUTE TO DOUG KING

**HON. SCOTT McINNIS**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, October 7, 2004*

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Doug King, a dedicated businessman from my hometown of Grand Junction, Colorado. Doug has been an empathetic and generous employer for the McDonald's company. Recently Doug was nominated for the Ronald Award that is given to owners and operators that are outstanding citizens in their communities and, it is my privilege to recognize his service before this body of Congress and Nation today.

Every year Doug donates his time and resources with thousands of programs like the Moab Senior Volunteer Program, The United Way, and several local, elementary, middle and high schools. Doug revolutionized the Mesa County Fair Program by spending thousands of dollars bidding up the price for third through last place animals at the fair, allowing many third place animals in Mesa County to bring in as much money as first place ones. At the end of the day the children always get to keep the animal that they have spent months raising with such special care.

I personally know Doug well, and he is one of the most generous people I have ever met. There are many occasions to point to like the time he bought hundreds of dictionaries for the Grand Junction Rotary so that every third grader in Grand Junction could have one. On another occasion he bought one-hundred extra-value meals to give to a mother who lost her child so she could give them to the homeless to feel better about herself. The one that really stands out is the bonus program that he developed for his employees. He developed the program to reward his employees for working hard, and initially it entailed giving away cash prizes at the end of every week up to four hundred dollars. The program was so effective Doug upped the ante giving away a Jeep Cherokee, a six-person spa, television sets, and a Ford Mustang Convertible.

Mr. Speaker, Doug King is a wonderful ambassador for the McDonald's company and a dedicated member of the Grand Junction community who has made public service a priority in his life. He is an excellent employer who truly cares for his employees and even more, he is a wonderful family man. He engenders