

COALITION TO SAVE MARRIAGE IN NEW YORK

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Press Release

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Responding to the NYC Comptroller's Report on the Potential Economic Impact of Same-Sex Marriage

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On June 5, 2007, the New York City Comptroller issued a glowing report entitled "Love Counts: The Economic Benefits of Marriage Equality for New York." The report touts the alleged economic benefits that would result from the legalization of same-sex marriage in the Empire State. The report must be seen for what it is--a piece of advocacy supporting a particular political viewpoint, not an unbiased examination of an important issue.

The conclusions reached in the report are based on little more than guesswork. The report is littered with dozens of "assumptions" and "estimates"; for instance, the report "estimates"--with no stated factual foundation--that more than 56,000 same-sex couples would travel from other states to obtain marriage licenses in New York if same-sex marriage became legal here. The paucity of hard facts in the report, combined with the array of predictions, suppositions and presumptions made by the Comptroller's Office, makes it impossible for an unbiased reader to reach any conclusion about the financial impact that same-sex marriage would have on our state.

Even if the Comptroller's analysis were plausible, his report would by no means justify the reshaping of our state's most basic social unit to accommodate the preferences of a small, vocal special interest group. While same-sex weddings might conceivably increase tourism, it goes without saying that the Legislature could enact other laws--such as laws allowing prostitution--that might increase tourism, but that would nonetheless be contrary to the best interests of our state.

The Comptroller's report pays only lip service to the significant concern that the legalization of same-sex marriage might once again require New York businesses to shoulder additional financial burdens because of government's devil-may-care attitude towards the employers of our state. The hemorrhage of businesses and jobs to North Carolina and other points south speaks volumes on that issue.

Finally, the report is glaringly silent on other economic factors that are directly relevant to the long-term impact of legalizing same-sex marriage. In Scandinavia, the legalization of civil unions for same-sex couples starting in the late 1980s and early 1990s has resulted in an overall decrease in marriages, as civil unions have played a role in undermining the institution of marriage. The result there has been a significant increase in out-of-wedlock births. Will such results bring long-term economic wellbeing to the Empire State?

The Comptroller's report is nothing more than a political puff piece that does not even begin to address the complexity of the financial repercussions--let alone the other repercussions--involved in the Governor's proposed marriage legislation.