

## **Please contact your State Senator ASAP (to support marriage equality – the session ends June 22)**

The religious right wing is now very active, here in New York State, against the marriage equality bill in the State Senate. To get the bill passed, we'll need lots of people to speak out. The following will take just 5 or 10 minutes of your time:

First, find out who your State Senator is, and find out the phone numbers of your State Senator's offices, by entering your street address and ZIP code in the text fields at the top left corner of the following page:

**[www.nysenate.gov/](http://www.nysenate.gov/)**

(Be sure to press ENTER after typing both your street address and your ZIP code in the appropriate text fields.)

Then, call at least one of your State Senator's offices and leave a message asking him or her to vote "Yes" for S4401, "an act to amend the domestic relations law, in relation to the ability to marry." The text of the bill is here:

**[www.tomduane.com/Legislation/S4401.html](http://www.tomduane.com/Legislation/S4401.html)**

In your phone message, please include your street address and ZIP code (to show that you are in the relevant State Senate district). And, if you are registered to vote, please say so. Please be polite.

A listing of how each state senator now stands on the issue can be found in the following blog post:

**[blog.nyarbb.com/2009/06/06/ny-state-senate/](http://blog.nyarbb.com/2009/06/06/ny-state-senate/)**

Alas, if the NY State Senate does pass the marriage equality bill this year, our battle will *not* be finished. No doubt the religious right wing will respond with a referendum, similar to California's infamous Proposition 8 that passed in November 2008. The GLBT community will need a massive effort to educate the public.

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## **After NY's marriage equality bill is passed ...**

As should be evident to anyone who has ever traveled outside Manhattan, New York State still has lots of passively homophobic people - in upstate rural areas, in the suburbs, and even in the outer boroughs - who could be stampeded, by a scary-enough TV commercial, into voting for a referendum like California's Proposition 8.

What is less well known is that New York has an active religious right wing still capable of launching and campaigning for such a referendum, and still capable of other attacks on the GLBT community, despite the great progress the GLBT rights movement has made these past 40 years. Not only does New York have local religious right wing leaders (such as NY State Senator Ruben Díaz, from the Bronx), but, also, the same national religious right wing organizations that poured money into California's Proposition 8 (e.g. the so-called "National Organization for Marriage," based in New Jersey) are now focused on opposing same-sex marriage here in New York.

New Yorkers tend not to be aware of the power of the religious right wing. Over and over again these past few decades, pundits have pronounced the religious right wing to be dead. But it always comes back to life, and it never really died.

We must not allow ourselves to be discouraged. The GLBT rights movement has won many victories, against great odds. But we need to know what we are up against.

## **New Yorkers Against Religion-Based Bigotry "Know Your Enemy" Project - dinner meeting in Queens Thursday, June 11, 2009, 7:30 PM**

At this meeting, we will (1) learn about the religious right wing and its activities here in New York, and then (2) brainstorm ways to educate New York area GLBT people about the religious right wing and our need to fight back. **We will meet at a diner in Forest Hills, near the 71 and Continental Avenue subway station (E, F, G, and R lines) on Queens Blvd. Please see details and RSVP on our Meetup site:**

**[meetup.com/nyarbb/](http://meetup.com/nyarbb/)**

**[nyarbb.com/kyep/](http://nyarbb.com/kyep/)**