



## PRESS RELEASE

Founded in 1991, Equality Illinois is the state's oldest, largest and most effective organization advocating for the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Illinoisans.

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 8, 2013

### **Equality Illinois Applauds GOP Support for Marriage Bill**

CHICAGO – As the Illinois House returns from its spring break today, it is clear that bipartisan support for the freedom to marry is growing in Illinois.

Equality Illinois, the state's oldest, largest and most effective advocacy organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Illinoisans, calls on the House to move expeditiously to translate majority public support for marriage equality into passing the Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act.

That likelihood moved a few steps closer during the legislative hiatus with the announcement that a member of the House Republican leadership, Rep. Ed Sullivan Jr. of Mundelein, supports the bill.

"Rep Sullivan's support for marriage honors the founding Republican principles of individual freedoms and the government not limiting private lives," said Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois. "I know that his constituents and fair-minded Illinoisans everywhere are very proud of him."

Sullivan's endorsement comes on the heels of the support given marriage equality last week by U.S. Sen. Mark Kirk, also a Republican. Also last week, more voices from the African-American clergy were raised in support of the bill.

"Even while lawmakers were on recess, support for the marriage bill has been growing and momentum building," Cherkasov said. "From members of Congress adding their voices of support to Illinois House Republicans committing to voting for the freedom to marry to African-American clergy calling for swift passage of the marriage law, every day we are hearing from more and more lawmakers wishing to do what is moral and what is right and what is wanted by a clear majority of Illinoisans - pass the marriage bill."

Cherkasov emphasized that supporters need to continue advocating for the bill up to the moment it is called for a roll call. "House members, especially those splitting from party doctrine, need to hear from their constituents, because our opponents will not remain silent in the face of this bipartisan momentum," Cherkasov said. "We need everyone to thank Rep. Sullivan and urge their own representative to follow his lead."

Supporters can send a message to their House member by clicking on [www.illinoisunites.org/letswin](http://www.illinoisunites.org/letswin).

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