



## 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 12, 2013

### Equality Illinois Condemns Representative's Reprehensible Comments

CHICAGO – Equality Illinois, the state's oldest and largest advocacy organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Illinoisans, calls on state Rep. Thomas Morrison of Palatine to apologize to the people of Illinois and to retract his ugly statement comparing marriage equality between consenting adults to marriage between an adult and a child.

"We have heard many ridiculous arguments against the Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act but none as vicious, mean-spirited and simply ludicrous as the one put forth by an elected representative of the people. We condemn the comments," said Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois.

"We are seeking the freedom to marry for same-sex adult couples, allowing them the same benefits and recognition that marriage gives opposite-sex couples," Cherkasov said. "To suggest, as Rep. Morrison did in a letter to a lesbian constituent in his district, that it would lead to marriage between a man and a 9-year-old girl is repulsive. Has he no shame in trying to use any argument against loving, adult couples trying to build a life together under a civil marriage law?"

When called on the carpet by his constituent, Rep. Morrison has tried to backtrack, saying he didn't mean to equate same-sex marriage to statutory rape. Yet, he stubbornly sticks to the argument that if Illinois joins nine other states and the District of Columbia in recognizing the freedom to marry for all adult couples, the next steps could be legalizing polygamy and adult-child relationships.

"We have heard some of these poisonous arguments from the hate groups that oppose marriage equality-- just read the Equality Illinois Marriage Hate Watch and Rapid Response Hub at [http://www.eqil.org/Hate\\_Watch.html](http://www.eqil.org/Hate_Watch.html). But we did not expect to see that from a state official," Cherkasov said. "Rep. Morrison should respect all of the constituents that he serves and not just the right-wing ideologues that he panders to."

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*For media assistance, please contact Mitchell Locin, Media Liaison for Equality Illinois  
773-477-7173; [info@eqil.org](mailto:info@eqil.org)*