

Maine Vote Signals Continued Opposition to Same-Sex Marriage

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WASHINGTON, Nov. 4 /Christian Newswire/ -- On Tuesday, voters in Maine made the state the 31st to uphold traditional marriage by popular vote. Passage of Question 1, the ballot referendum that repealed the state legislature's same-sex marriage law, received wide support from Maine churches.

While the same-sex marriage repeal campaign received less funding than the pro-same-sex marriage campaign, religious groups played a strong role in both campaigns. The Roman Catholic Diocese of Portland was an early funder of the repeal campaign, while liberal religious bodies such as the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Association opposed the measure.

The Institute on Religion and Democracy has published a new paper on the role of traditional marriage in society. Part of the Institute's Mount Nebo series, the paper examines the impact of marriage upon public life. It is available free for download at www.TheIRD.org.

IRD Vice President Alan Wisdom commented:

"Same-sex marriage proponents have labeled opposition to gay unions as driven by fear. On the contrary, many people support traditional marriage because of a positive belief in its intrinsic value as a building block of public life.

"Arguments for same-sex marriage view history as a straight-line narrative pointing towards ever greater sexual autonomy. Many Christian churches, however, note that history oscillates between license and responsibility.

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"Same-sex marriage proponents insist that the Maine law ensured that no one would be required to compromise their religious beliefs. But if this is a justice issue, as proponents insist, then people will be pressured to abandon their supposed 'bigotry.' Any temporary accommodations of conscience will later be swept aside, as has been observed in the Lutheran Church of Sweden, which now requires churches to conduct such marriages."

The Institute on Religion & Democracy is an ecumenical alliance of U.S. Christians working to reform their churches' social witness, in accord with biblical and historic Christian teachings, and to contribute to the renewal of democratic society at home and abroad.

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