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A Definition

MetroNews Talkline
Charleston, Kanawha County

What is marriage?

A hearing on a possible Constitutional Amendment in West Virginia that would define marriage as between one man and one woman is scheduled for Tuesday at the State Capitol.

[Attorney](#) Stephen Skinner with the group Fairness West Virginia says state law already does that adequately in the form of the Defense of Marriage Act. "Same sex marriage is already banned in West Virginia. There's no need to fiddle with our Constitution in order to do what has already been done," Skinner says.

But Jeremy Dys with the Family Policy Council of West Virginia says West Virginians should vote on the issue. He says putting a Constitutional Amendment on the ballot would allow that to happen.

"Why are we avoiding the democratic process?" Dys asked on Monday's MetroNews Talkline. "That's the question I've still yet to hear people answer. Is there a reason not to let the people decide here? I'm not hearing that."

Dys continues, "The people of West Virginia should define marriage, not politicians or judges and they want to do that. We should let them do so." Dys says the Defense of Marriage Act is not enough to prevent the redefinition of marriage.

Skinner, though, says a similar measure has been upheld in Maryland. He says the DOMA law is enough and, he says, it's heterosexuals, *not* homosexuals, who are threatening the sanctity of marriage.

"The crisis in terms of marriage in West Virginia has nothing to do with gay people. It has to do with people who are already married in West Virginia," Skinner said also on Monday's MetroNews Talkline.

"We need to reach out to married folks in West Virginia right now and figure out a way to keep them married, how to support them."

The hearing in front of a joint legislative committee will run from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the room for the Senate Judiciary Committee on Tuesday.

It's part of monthly committee meetings scheduled for lawmakers this week in Charleston.

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