
Kernan, AG disagree on gay marriage proposal

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INDIANAPOLIS — Attorney General Steve Carter supports a proposed amendment to the state constitution defining marriage as a bond between one man and one woman, but Gov. Joe Kernan said Friday that Indiana law needs no changes.

Carter supports an Indiana Senate resolution that would define marriage as a union between only a man and woman.

"Indiana's statute and the sanctity of marriage is vulnerable without a Constitutional Amendment to provide protection against those who would challenge the tradition of marriage in court," Carter said in a statement released Friday. "We need to protect the institution of marriage as it has long been recognized in our state's history."

Republican Sen. Brandt Hershman of Wheatfield, who sponsored the resolution, said the constitutional amendment would make current law more clear.

"This amendment will ensure that marriage remain the sacred bond that it has always been," Hershman said.

But Kernan said Indiana's laws already take care of the issue.

"Indiana law is pretty clear on that right now," Kernan said in a meeting with journalists. "I am not in favor of changing Indiana law."

Kernan stopped short of supporting civil unions between people of the same sex in Indiana, but said if two people of the same sex want to live together or enter into a civil union, it's their decision to make.

"If that's the decision two people make, that's appropriate," Kernan said.

Kernan also said Indiana's laws should be changed to add sexual orientation as a form of discrimination in civil rights laws. He said sexual orientation is currently included in discrimination statutes by executive order.

"I am not in favor of discrimination of any kind against anyone," Kernan said.

To become law, the proposed constitutional amendment must pass two consecutive general assemblies and be approved by a majority of the state's voters. Unlike bills, constitutional amendments do not require approval from the governor.