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Good afternoon. I am Dr. Tom Finn, a voter from Southington I am voicing my opposition to proposed bills seeking to create same-sex marriage or unions.

As a husband, father of three children and a psychologist in clinical practice, my concern for this bill is that it will lead us to lose focus on the broader issue of what is good for our society, and for our children. The family has always been centered in the marriage of a man and woman dedicated to a lifetime of love **and** to the rearing of children and this is not by chance ... it is because it is what works best. This is not in any way intended to de-value the single-parent family like the one I grew up in, or any other family, rather it is to say that one man and one woman in marriage between has always been the cornerstone of our culture. I am often uncomfortable addressing these difficult issues as I am in opposition to the deeply held cause of others and I appreciate the way these hearings have been conducted in such respectful fashion. I, too, believe in the dignity of all human persons, regardless of how they live their lives and agree that all persons, whether their sexual behavior is heterosexual or homosexual, deserve respect and that no one's rights under the Constitution should ever be denied. I do, however, disagree with the proposed re-definition of marriage because to endorse this would contribute to further struggles of family life in our society

Today I would like to address two of the many assumptions central to our discussions. The first assumption is that sexual orientation and sexual behavior is genetic, inherited, unchangeable and widespread. In other words, it is an "innate" characteristic. The root of this assumption is reflected in this statement from the book The Homosexualization of America:

"The greatest single victory of the gay movement ... has been to shift the debate from *behavior to identity* thus forcing opponents into a position where they can be seen as attacking civil rights of homosexual citizens. I

This shift of the "debate from behavior to identity" encouraged people to believe that anyone living a homosexual lifestyle didn't choose to do so, rather, they did so because they were "born that way," or, in other words, that there was a genetic or biological cause for homosexuality. This belief was created primarily in the early 1990's with media reports of such research discoveries. Since that time, these proclaimed discoveries have been invalidated and disproven, and since I have provided you with more specific detail concerning this research in my written testimony, let me read you the words of the original researchers themselves:

"...there is no way of telling whether those" structural (brain) differences are the cause of people's sexual behavior or the consequence or none of the above. ²

"Sexuality is greatly influenced by environment and that the role of genetics is, in the end, limited" ³

...homosexuality is "culturally transmitted, not inherited."⁴

^{5,6,7}

These conclusions have been supported by other studies in the later 1990's.

As for whether people can change their sexual orientation and lifestyle research supporting the successful leaving of a homosexual lifestyle has existed for many decades.^{8,9,10,11,12,13, 4,15,16} More recent studies^{17,18} have added to the knowledge that, although certainly difficult, some men and women who have identified themselves as gay and lesbian are able to discontinue such lifestyles. ¹⁹

In terms of numbers, most activists want us to believe that 10-15% of the population is homosexual. This number is derived from the publications of Alfred Kinsey over 50 years ago which have been widely challenged and proven false. More recent estimates put the number at 1-2%,²⁰ and the number of Connecticut households occupied by "same-sex partners" is less than 6/10 of 1%. ²¹

So is this assumption accurate that homosexuality is inherited/genetic, unchangeable and widespread? The answer is no. The consensus of scientists is that homosexuality is not biologically based, rather it is socially influenced. ^{22,23,24}

The second assumption we need to address is that children raised by same-sex couples are no different from children raised by a mother and father. This has not been proven. This assumption has come to the forefront of the debate as the American Academy of Pediatrics recently wrote: "A growing body of scientific literature demonstrates that children who grow up with 1 or 2 gay and/or lesbian parents fare as well in emotional, cognitive, social and sexual functioning as do children whose parents are heterosexual."

If we closely evaluate this "body of scientific literature," it does not support AAP's position. Most importantly, most of the research on which such claims are based does not compare children reared in same-sex homes to children reared by both a mother and father. They usually compare same-sex homes to single-parent, heterosexual homes. Secondly, the studies cited are some of the worst examples of scientifically invalid, agenda-driven research imaginable and the authors of these studies,

themselves, state in the body of their publications that the research is so poorly designed with small samples, lack of random sampling, bias on the part of the subjects, etc., that valid conclusions cannot be established^{26,27} As an example:

"A further objection to the findings lies in the nature of the samples studied. Both groups were volunteers obtained through gay and single-parent magazines and associations. Obviously, these do not constitute random samples, and it is not possible to know what biases are involved in the method of sample selection." (Susan Golombotz)

A broader, more valid "body of scientific literature" tells us that children will have much healthier lives if they grow up in a home with both a mother and father present. Specifically, kids who live with mom and dad:

- are generally better off academically, financially, emotionally, socially and behaviorally and have better health
- delay sex longer and receive more parental support
- have a mom who provides emotional and physical nurturance and dad who helps develop positive character traits^{28,29,30,31,32,33,34,35,36,37,38,39,40}

Certainly no one would conclude that a child who grows up in a single-parent home will be unable to thrive. Thanks to the dedication and sacrifice of his or her mom or dad, wonderful growth can occur, but, as a whole, the challenges of single-parenting are many and kids who grow up in single parent families are more likely to live in poverty,⁴¹ experience physical abuse and neglect have a greater risk of injury, health problems, repeating a grade or being expelled and a greater likelihood to be treated for emotional and behavioral problems.⁴³ Since the research usually cited to support same-sex parenting compares kids raised in gay or lesbian homes to homes without a mother and father present and argues that they are no different, then logic holds that children raised by same-sex couples are subject to the same increased risks as children raised without both mom and dad in the home.

Additionally, research also shows that many gay and lesbian homes are different in other important ways which place children at risk. Conclusions from these studies show an increased risk in the home for:

- significant levels of promiscuity^{47,48} that do not model monogamy as the norm^{44,45,46} while most married heterosexual couples remain faithful over their lifetime.
- and an increased risk of the following:
 - bacterial⁵² and parasitical STDs including AIDS.^{49,50,51}
 - violence
 - mental health problems^{53,54} and suicide^{55,56}
 - substance abuse
 - sexual identity confusion including increased homosexual behavior^{57,58,59,60,61,62,63} in_{cest}^{64,65}
 - shorter parental life-span⁶⁶

If same-sex marriage is created, adoption and foster-care placements into same-sex homes would place children in settings vulnerable to the above influences and risks. Contrary to what the AAP may imply, children are at greater risk if they are raised outside of a home in which both a mother and father are present.

SUMMARY

In summary, the assumptions behind the same-sex union agenda are false and unfounded. The health and well-being of children, of adults and of society depends on the nurturing power of a family centered in one man and one woman in a life-long, faithful, and fruitful marriage. I believe that our laws need to respond to the needs of our society in a way that fulfills a positive purpose and our State has a need for families which provide the stability and nurturance necessary for the well-being of our children. I oppose the re-definition of marriage in which the same-sex marriage movement appears more concerned with placing the desires of same-sex couples ahead of the intrinsic right of every child to the healthiest family environment possible: that provided by a man and women in marriage.

Contrary to some opinions, love does not make a family. Love, certainly, is one component of a healthy family, but to say that love makes a family places the well-being of children into the hands of subjective emotions and standards. I would offer, instead, that based on centuries of experience and valid research, that only when a man and woman lovingly commit to a lifetime of fidelity, responsibility and hard work are the best interests of children and society served. I hope that we will be able to honor and preserve marriage as the faithful union of one man and one woman.

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