



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Ruben Diaz

"If the NY Senate Passes Gay Marriage, It's Republicans Who Will Take the Heat"

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We are two lifelong New Yorkers who do not agree about many things. We are of different races, religions, and political parties. One of us is a Bronx liberal Democrat, the other of us heads the Conservative party.

But we agree on at least three great truths:

First, marriage is and should remain the union of husband and wife. Same-sex marriage is a government takeover of an institution the government did not create and should not redefine.

Second, gay marriage is not inevitable. The mainstream media widely retailed a misconstrued version of Sen. Rev. Diaz's remarks in Albany this week. We both agree, as Senator Diaz said, that if a gay-marriage bill passes it will be because the GOP caved for no discernible good reason at all.

Third, as practical pols we agree: If gay marriage passes, it is Republicans across the state who will pay the biggest price.

Politics is a team sport. The decision of senate Republicans to take up this bill, and thus help enable Governor Cuomo's goal to pass gay marriage, will affect the way voters across the state view the Republican party — especially if Republican state senators told voters one thing during the campaign, and now propose to change their votes at Governor Cuomo's behest.

The National Organization for Marriage released a poll of registered New Yorkers, conducted this past weekend. Fifty-seven percent of New York voters agree that "marriage should only be between a man and a woman" versus 32 percent who disagree. Meanwhile, the new NOM poll shows that only about one in four New York voters (26 percent) prefer legislators in Albany to decide this issue, while 59 percent say the issue of marriage should be decided by the voters in New York.

Other polls with different wordings have produced widely different results — but there is no poll that puts gay marriage high on the priority list of any significant number of voters. And even those polls most favorable to gay marriage continue to show that solid majorities of Republican voters have not shifted at all in their opposition to gay marriage.

If gay marriage advocates honestly believe they have a super-majority of New Yorkers in their corner, they should join with us to agree to permit a referendum to decide this issue. If they do not, their claims to represent the majority will ring rather hollow.

This gay-marriage bill is not in the best interests of New York, it is not the choice of New Yorkers, and it is decidedly against the interests of the Republican party.

Republicans have conferenced for four days without reaching agreement on what to do about gay marriage in New York. The enormous public outpouring against the bill — Sen. Greg Ball said 60 percent of calls have opposed it in his district — and the hundreds of people who