



**PDF Complete**  
Thank you for evaluating  
PDF Complete.

[Click Here to purchase full featured PDF Complete products](#)

ny for David Lilly, Psy.D.

My name is Dr. David Lilly. I am a psychologist and am the president-elect of the Maine Psychological Association, an organization representing over 600 psychologists and psychologist examiners in Maine. I am here to express the Association's strongest support for LD 1020 (An Act to End Discrimination in Civil Marriage and Affirm Religious Freedom).

Why is our organization so supportive of this bill?

Social scientists have long understood that marriage as a cultural institution can have a profound effect on the lives of married people, connecting them socially and ordering their lives. Allowing same-sex couples to join in marriage can enhance their legal and emotional security and (PAUSE) can benefit the children being raised by gay and lesbian parents. While it may vary from person to person, empirical research demonstrates that marriage may benefit those who join in it, including by improving the psychological and physical health of the married partners as well as providing concrete legal duties and benefits. It's common sense that people often feel better when they know they are married to someone who is committed to them and their well-being. That is as true for gay people as it is for others.

As to children, we know that some gay people form families with children through birth and adoption just as other families do. Marriage could benefit those children by giving them a clearly defined, baseline legal relationship with both of their parents from the start. Children may benefit not only from strong emotional bonds with their parents, but also from the stability and assurance stable legal bonds can provide. For example, when a parent dies marriage can provide legal protection by minimizing the likelihood of competing claims by non-parent relatives for custody of the child.

Our national association, the American Psychological Association, has carefully reviewed the research on parenting and child outcomes, including the decades of research



**PDF Complete**  
Thank you for evaluating  
PDF Complete.  
[Click Here to purchase full featured PDF Complete products](#)

concluded that "There is no scientific evidence that parental sexual orientation: Lesbian and gay parents are as likely as heterosexual parents to provide supportive and healthy environments for their children." Summing up the research, it found "that adjustment, development, and psychological well-being of children is unrelated to parental sexual orientation and that the children of lesbian and gay parents are as likely as those of heterosexual parents to flourish." The data show what most parents know from experience: it is the quality of parenting, the relationship of the parents to one another and the relationships of the parents to their children, that is important.

The scientific consensus – as you can see not only from the research but also from the professional organizations represented here today – is that gay and lesbian parents are just as likely as heterosexual parent to be capable in their parenting and to raise healthy, well-adjusted children.

The research is there: children have the same chance to develop into healthy adults in gay and lesbian families as in heterosexual families. Therefore, it makes no sense to withhold marriage from these parents. In fact, allowing committed same-sex couples to join in marriage could provide a more secure legal bond, eliminate some of the stresses that come with being a member of a minority group, and offer value and respect to those families under the law.

The association is aware that research on children is sometimes is mis-used to campaign for a public policy that would continue discrimination against gay and lesbian couples. Let me repeat the conclusions of the thorough and painstaking review of research done by the American Psychological Association:

"Psychological research on relationships and couples provides no evidence to justify discrimination against same-sex couples."

"Overall, results of research suggest that the development, adjustment, and well-being of children with lesbian and gay parents do not differ markedly from that of children with heterosexual parents."



**PDF**  
Complete

*Thank you for evaluating  
PDF Complete.*

[Click Here to purchase  
full featured PDF Complete products](#)

the research is clear. The Maine Psychological

Association again affirms its strongest support for LD 1020.