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Conservatives Denounce Anti-Gay Amendment In New Ad Campaign

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(Washington, D.C.) A radio and newspaper ad campaign targeting conservative Republicans is using some of the nation's most outspoken conservatives to condemn the proposed amendment to the Constitution banning same-sex marriage.

The ads quote George Will, former Wyoming Sen. Alan Simpson and former Georgia GOP Rep. Bob Barr, among others. Barr was the author of the federal Defense of Marriage law that already bans gay marriage. Will is a well-known columnist.

The \$350,000 advertising campaign is jointly sponsored by the Human Rights Campaign and Citizen Outreach and will run in 12 cities across the country during conservative talk shows, including Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity and Dr. Laura as well as in local papers.

"Think it's conservative to amend the Constitution to ban marriage for gay and lesbian couples? Plenty of conservatives across American don't," the ads say.

"They believe that, even if you oppose gay marriage, you don't amend the Constitution to deal with every controversial social issue. And you definitely don't amend the Constitution to give more power to the federal government," the

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"It's why conservative former Wyoming Senator Alan Simpson says the Constitutional amendment 'minimizes the Constitution.' Conservative columnist George Will calls the Federal Marriage Amendment 'a misuse of fundamental law.' And conservative former Congressman Bob Barr - the man who wrote the Defense of Marriage Act - calls a Constitutional Amendment 'needlessly intrusive and punitive.'

"Real conservatives agree: be conservative with the Constitution - don't amend it. Call your Representative and Senators at 1-877-762-8762. Tell them to oppose the Federal Marriage Amendment."

The campaign will run in 12 traditionally conservative centers: Indianapolis, Las Vegas, Little Rock, Ark., Miami, Milwaukee, Minneapolis, Omaha, Neb., Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, Salt Lake City, and Tampa, Fla.

"While some may think of HRC as a liberal organization, we are truly bipartisan," said HRC President Cheryl Jacques. "And on this issue we share common ground with many conservatives and moderates. This ad campaign will show that people of all political stripes see this amendment for what it is - a divisive and reckless use of our Constitution."

According to a December 2003 National Annenberg Election Survey, 51 percent of the public opposes such an amendment; 42 percent support. A Gallup poll in December also shows that among all the issues Americans intend to vote on in the upcoming elections, denying marriage rights to gay and lesbian couples ranks dead last among a list of priorities. Terrorism, the economy and controlling federal spending all ranked significantly higher than policies toward gays and lesbians.

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