
Georgia's Marriage Amendment Passed in 2004

"This state shall recognize as marriage only the union of man and woman. Marriages between persons of the same sex are prohibited in this state.

"No union between persons of the same sex shall be recognized by this state as entitled to the benefits of marriage. This state shall not give effect to any public act, record, or judicial proceeding of any other state or jurisdiction respecting a relationship between persons of the same sex that is treated as a marriage under the laws of such other state or jurisdiction. The courts of this state shall have no jurisdiction to grant a divorce or separate maintenance with respect to any such relationship or otherwise to consider or rule on any of the parties' respective rights arising as a result of or in connection with such relationship."

– Constitution of the State of Georgia, Article I, Section IV

Six months before the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) passed Congress in September 1996 the Georgia legislature had already passed H.B. 1580¹ to define marriage as "only the union of man and woman." H.B. 1580 became law when Governor Zell Miller signed it April 2, 1996.

Also, H.B. 1580 settled the question of marriage licenses, by (a) prohibiting the issuance of marriage licenses to same-sex couples and (b) prohibiting the recognition of marriage licenses from other states that don't meet Georgia's legal definition of marriage.

When judges began declaring other state marriage laws to be unconstitutional and legislators realized state laws needed constitutional protection from judicial activism, by 2004 Georgia legislators introduced two resolutions² to amend the State Constitution. One was H.R. 1470 that defined marriage as between "man and woman," but did *not* restrict it to *one* man and *one* woman and did *not* address marriage licenses or unions made in other states.

However, S.R. 595 addressed all those issues and passed the General Assembly on March 31, 2004 as a referendum for the November 2, 2004 ballot, when voters were asked to answer this: *"Shall the Constitution be amended so as to provide that this state shall recognize as marriage only the union of man and woman?"*

The referendum³ passed and the *Constitution of the State of Georgia* now defines marriage as (a) a union between a man and a woman, (b) prohibit the issuance of marriage licenses to same-sex applicants and (c) prohibit the recognition of such unions performed elsewhere.

The strategy to overturn traditional marriage: Kirk and Madsen's "The Overhauling of Straight America" says, "[A]lmost all behavior begins to look normal if you are exposed to enough of it at close quarters and among your acquaintances.... [T]alk about gayness until the issue becomes thoroughly tiresome.... In the early stages of the campaign to reach straight America, *the masses should not be shocked and repelled by premature exposure to homosexual behavior itself.* Instead, the imagery of sex should be downplayed and gay rights should be reduced to an abstract social question as much as possible.... *First let the camel get his nose inside the tent – and only later his unsightly derriere!*"

¹ Introduced by Representative Ron Crews and Representative James Mills, February 2, 1996

² H.R. 1470 by Democrat Representative Jamieson and S.R. 595 by Republican Senator Mike Crotts

³ Referendum vote: Yeas 2,454,930 (76.2 %); Nays 768,716 (23.8 %)

What Same-Sex “Marriage” Has Done to Massachusetts¹

The following excerpts from the October 2008 (updated 2012) report by President Brian Camenker of the pro-family MassResistance (sic), Waltham, Massachusetts. Its subtitle: “It’s far worse than most people realize.”

On November 18, 2003 justices of the Massachusetts Supreme Court ruled in *Goodridge* that it is *unconstitutional not to allow same-sex marriage*. That caused prompt changes in education

Public Schools

By early December 2003, a school-wide high school assembly featuring an array of speakers celebrated same-sex marriage. Some of the speakers were teachers announcing up-coming marriages to their same-sex partners, with plans to start families through adoption or artificial insemination. Literature on the normalcy of same-sex marriage was distributed to students.

Within months the program was in middle schools. In September 2004, an 8th-grade teacher in Brookline told National Public Radio that the marriage ruling opens the door to the teaching of homosexuality, thereby allowing her to decide how explicitly to discuss gay sex with students.

By 2005 elementary school teaching was affected and objecting parents were met with hostility. Lexington, Mass. kindergartners received copies of a the picture book *Who’s in a Family?* presenting same-sex couples as just like students’ own parents. A kindergartner’s father was arrested and jailed overnight after refusing to leave a school meeting unless officials agreed to notify him when homosexuality or transgenderism would be discussed with his son.

The next year, second graders at the school were read a book entitled *King and King*, about two men who fall in love and marry each other. The book ended with a picture of the kings kissing. Complaining parents were told the school did not have to notify them or allow opt-outs.

After a federal judge ruled in 2007 that parents have no rights concerning a school’s teaching homosexual relationships, the appellate judge² ruled that the *school has a duty to normalize homosexual relationships to children*, but is *not* obligated to contact parents or allow opt-outs.

Schools added library shelving for books normalizing homosexual behavior and lifestyles, some were explicit, even pornographic. Parental complaints are met with hostility and ignored.

“Gay days” in schools are considered necessary to fight “intolerance.” So, “gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender days” are held in hundreds of high schools, even middle schools, across the state. Result: with the persistent unlimited promotion of those and other variant behaviors, the number of pupils self-identifying as “gay” rose almost 50% from 2005 – 2009.

Schools have moved to normalizing transgenderism (including cross-dressing and sex changes) and the Massachusetts-funded Commission on Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth goes into schools with programs and activities that condition children to promote that agenda.

In 2006 a cross-dressing man undergoing sex-change surgery was brought into a third-grade class in Newton to teach that there are now “different kinds of families.” When she objected to the principal, school officials told a mother that her complaints were “inappropriate behavior.”

Public Health

The STD test required to obtain a marriage license was eliminated five months after same-sex “marriages” began in Massachusetts, despite increases in syphilis cases and other STDs.

¹ www.MassResistance.org

² Mr. Camenker said, “Because same-sex marriage is legal, federal judges have ruled that the schools now have a duty to portray homosexual relationships as normal to children, despite what parents think or believe.”

Clarkston: Unsuspecting Town Changed by Refugee¹ Resettlement

Excerpts from *Outcasts United*

Clarkston, Georgia, was a typical southern town until it was designated a refugee settlement center in the 1990s, becoming the first American home for scores of families in flight from the world's war zones – from Liberia and Sudan to Iraq and Afghanistan. Suddenly, Clarkston's streets were filled with women wearing hijab, the smells of cumin and curry, and kids of all colors playing soccer in any open space they could find. The town also became home to an American-educated Jordanian woman who founded a youth soccer team to unify Clarkston's refugee children. These kids named themselves the Fugees.

This is the complex and inspiring tale of a small town becoming a global community....
– *Outcasts United*, by Warren St. John, 2009 Spiegel & Grau, New York (Quoted from Book Cover Flaps)

Although Clarkston in DeKalb County occupies an area slightly larger than 1.1 square miles – 1.0 square mile of land, 0.94% of water – it's home to more than a hundred nationalities. The first refugees arrived in Clarkston in the late 1980s and early 1990s from Southeast Asia – mostly from Vietnam and Cambodia. World Relief and the International Rescue Committee opened offices in Clarkston to serve still more refugees arriving from African countries.

Between 1996 and 2001 over 19,000 refugees were resettled in Georgia, many in or around Clarkston. According to the 2000 census, Clarkston's population was one-third foreign-born, with the highest percentage of people from Somalia of anywhere in the U.S. In a relatively short time, Clarkston had completely changed.

A longtime resident said, “The city didn't realize that we were being inundated with people coming in, because it was a gradual thing. Nobody understood.” So the small town of Clarkston, Georgia became one of the most diverse communities in the country.

Vacancies rose and rents fell, middle-class residents moved, crime surged, landlords filled apartment complexes through government housing programs and cut back on upkeep. Buildings deteriorated into urban decay, gang activity grew and gunshots rang out at night.

Within a decade membership in Clarkston Baptist Church fell from 700 to just over 100 and, after 125 years of serving the community, became the Clarkston International Bible Church. Now, its multiple separate congregations of Liberians, Ethiopians, French-speaking West Africans and Sudanese meet at various times each Sunday to native-style worship and native garb. A larger “come-one, come-all” service is held in the main sanctuary in English.

People from 145 countries and 761 ethnic groups live in Clarkston, compliments of the U.S. government and the U.N. as 2,500 new refugees arrive there, annually. Clarkston High School boasts students from 54 countries, speaking 47 different languages. Public records show that of all refugees coming to Georgia since 2007, nearly 15 percent came to Clarkston.

August 2012, just after refugee agencies submitted their annual capacity proposal to the U.S. State Department, a number used to determine refugee placement, the Georgia Department of Human Services sent a letter to the federal agency requesting a 50 percent reduction in refugee resettling in the state. Though it was called a “reduction” of 20 percent, in actuality, it was an 8 percent *increase* over the 2,582 refugees sent to Georgia during the last fiscal year.

¹ **Refugees arriving in Georgia counties from 2004-2013:** Clarke County, 25; Oconee, 6; Jackson, 21; Madison, 145; Walton, 63; Barrow, 25; **DeKalb, 14,968** where 16% is foreign-born from 157 countries and 142 languages; Gwinnett, 1,125. **Georgia refugees by origin 2004-2013:** Burma, 5,137; Bhutan, 4,379; Somalia, 3,145; Iraq, 1,737; Ethiopia, 889. **Federal funding for refugees: Incoming:** \$12,210,949 total; \$979,993, private and corporate. **Outgoing:** \$5,450,000 cash and medical; \$2,652,963 social services; \$1,632,980 targeted assistance; \$152,790 preventative health grant; \$550,000 school impact grant; \$4,006,200 matching grant.

International Rescue Committee (IRC) has 22 offices assisting incoming refugees. In 2012 they helped 7,600 new arrivals and more are coming. In Bangkok, Thailand, IRC runs a Resettlement Support Center to help others enter the U.S. where they receive free-of-charge aid, food, shelter, employment skills, job placement, clothing, medical care, education, English-language classes and community orientation during their first months in this country. Also, they are guided toward a path to permanent residency or U.S. citizenship.

Governor Deal's Comments on Refugee Resettlement, GOP Convention, May 18, 2013

But there is another arena in which we have said to the federal government “enough is enough”. It is an area that, by-and-large has received no attention, but it deserves some attention. It came to my attention primarily through democrat members of the General Assembly that Georgia was becoming a state that was receiving an inordinate share of refugees who are being placed in our communities. We are the 10th largest state, but according to the fiscal year 2011 figures, our state had the 6th highest number of refugees of any state in the country.

Now, we're a big state, but in addition to having a disproportionately larger share of refugees sent to Georgia, they have also made a very serious escalation of a problem. 69 percent of all refugees sent to Georgia wind up in DeKalb County and even further, 28 percent of those go to the one little city of Clarkston.

Folks, there's something wrong with that picture. So, it takes time for cities, counties, and the state to absorb refugees into our population. Because they qualify for all federally approved benefits, like Medicaid, food stamps, and housing, and Georgia should not be subjected to the inordinate costs of these individuals both socially and economically. And as such we have had a significant reduction in the number of refugees coming to our state.

We are not cold-hearted. We are a very compassionate people in our state, and we're willing to do our fair share, but you can't just dump these large numbers of people into a community and a very restricted area without having significant consequences that probably are unintended but should have been anticipated.

Now, while we're talking about the refugee problem, my good friends in Congress hopefully have already picked up on the fact, that the refugee status in my opinion is being misused. As the name implies, it is supposed to be granted to people who are seeking refuge in this country because they are being threatened, intimidated, or their lives are in jeopardy in the country from which they come.

How is it that the Boston marathon bombers, who have come here because they were afraid to live in their own country, can take month-long vacations back to the country and we never asked a question about it? You're entitled to go back. Why don't you just stay there when you get there?

And the actions we took in Georgia on this issue were very far in advance of the information that is come about since that bombing. We didn't wait till after that to act. We acted months in advance of that happening.

ACTION – Share this data with your legislators. If you are unsure who they are, the public library can tell you.

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