

Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, D.C.
P.O. Box 75265, Washington, D.C. 20013
(202) 667-5139 • www.glaa.org

Testimony on Bill 19-615
The Judicial Declaration of Parentage Amendment Act of 2011

Delivered before the Committee on the Judiciary
February 9, 2012

Good morning. I am Rick Rosendall, Vice President for Political Affairs of the Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington. I am here to declare GLAA's support for Bill 19-615, The Judicial Declaration of Parentage Amendment Act of 2011.

This is another in a series of housekeeping bills required by the happy fact that the District is ahead of most states in granting both equal marriage rights to same-sex couples and equal rights to domestic partners.

The Domestic Partnership Judicial Determination of Parentage Act was passed in 2009. It was drafted principally by American University law professor Nancy Polikoff with assistance from the National Center for Lesbian Rights, and with the strong support of GLAA.¹ It amended Title 16 to include domestic partners as parents of children born in the District of Columbia; include domestic partners within the coverage of the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act; and amend the Vital Records Act to allow the inclusion of domestic partners on birth certificates. This brought D.C. Code more in line with the realities and needs of District families by clearly establishing the relationship of a child to both of its parents in a domestic partnership. Later that year, we passed the Marriage Equality Act while retaining our domestic partnership law. This left gaps in the law as it pertains to couples from other states.

The present bill further amends Title 16, regarding adoption, to include circumstances where the child was born in the District, and to allow the court to issue a determination of parentage for a child native to the District whose parents live elsewhere.

As it happens, I myself was born in the District to parents who lived in Montgomery County, Maryland. This created no problem because they were heterosexually married and there was no conflict of laws with other states. Same-sex couples and their children, and our city's diverse families generally, deserve the same legal protections as opposite-sex couples and their children. Please, therefore, pass Bill 19-615 promptly.

Thank you.

¹ Testimony on B17-0726 and B17-0727, Rick Rosendall/GLAA, July 11, 2008, <http://www.glaa.org/archive/2008/glaaondpbills0711.shtml>