



## AMERICANS FOR LIFE

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### Illinois Defense of Marriage Kickoff a Great Success



**Caption: Peter LaBarbera speaks to the media at the May 27 pro-marriage rally in downtown Chicago**

(Chicago — May 27, 2011) Some two hundred supporters of traditional marriage sang, prayed and listened to speakers in downtown Chicago today to kickoff the drive to put an advisory referendum on the Illinois ballot that will oppose the Civil Unions law passed earlier this year.

Eleven speakers, including 2010 Republican gubernatorial candidate Adam Andrzejewski, encouraged the crowd, gathered at the James R. Thompson/State of Illinois Center, to educate others and to get 500,000 signatures for the referendum to be put on the 2012 ballot. The referendum states that marriage between one man and one woman “shall be the only agreement recognized as a marriage or similar union for any purpose.”

The event was covered by all the major Chicago media (see [Chicago Tribune](#) story). The rally was opposed by about three dozen chanting homosexual activists, who carried a large banner, “Jesus was radically inclusive.” Police kept the opponents safely away from the pro-marriage crowd.

Andrzejewski, founder of [For the Good of Illinois](#), warned that the homosexual lobby will use “intimidation and politics” in its efforts, and that will include trying to stop grants to the Catholic Church for its adoption agency work.

Rev. Hiram Crawford, Jr., pastor of Israel Methodist Community Church on Chicago's South Side, told the crowd, of the “importance of standing up for life and righteousness.”

## **“Jesus is delivering homosexuals every day”**

Perhaps the most rousing talk of the day was that of former lesbian Linda Jernigan, founder of [Rescuing Homosexuals](#), whose booming voice and convincing personal stories inspired many hearts. She said she went to Springfield and found that “most lawmakers never heard someone who left homosexuality.” She added that, “Jesus is saving and delivering homosexuals every day.... Hell is not made for homosexuals; hell is made for sinners.”

Peter LaBarbera, founder of [Americans for Truth About Homosexuality](#), told the group that those who oppose gay rights are not part of an intolerant and discriminatory movement. The repeal of the Civil Unions law, on the other hand, is an effort to “preserve religious rights.”

LaBarbera noted that Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rockford on Thursday announced it would [shut its adoption services down](#) because it could not comply with the new Civil Unions legislation which will become effective June 1, and will require such agencies to refer same-sex couples to other adoption agencies.

## **31 states have affirmed “one man, one woman”**

Thirty-one states have affirmed the language of “one man and one woman” for traditional marriage, including California, LaBarbera said, adding that Illinois House Speaker John Madigan “buried the legislation” for the referendum in Illinois. LaBarbera also led a chant among those gathered, “Let the people vote.”

Dr. Eric Wallace, publisher of the [Freedom’s Journal](#) magazine, said that the Civil Unions law “was an attempt to rid our culture of traditional marriage,” which he said was to give and receive love, bear children, and benefit society. On the other hand, “People can change. Homosexuality is not immutable.”

“The people of God have been silent and sometimes compliant,” Wallace cautioned, saying that the church has “exchanged a thermostat for a thermometer,” meaning that the church is guilty of reflecting culture instead of forming it.

## **Marriage given to us by God**

Mary Ann Hackett, president of [Catholic Citizens of Illinois](#), said that “marriage is not an invention of the state, but given to us by the plan of God. Our role is not to define marriage, but to protect it.” Approval of a homosexual lifestyle, on the other hand, is “damaging to the body and the soul.”

“Opposition to homosexuality is not discrimination,” she said. In marriage, rather, there is a unique relationship that spouses have that single persons don’t have. She said that we must not “buckle in to a counterfeit marriage.”

The final speaker, Jim Finnegan, founder of the [Choose Life](#) license plate movement and the Nativity Scene efforts at the Daley Center, encouraged the crowd to 1) gather signatures on the [referendum form](#), 2) buy the tee-shirts that proclaim marriage as between one man and one woman, and 3) attend events such as these.

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## **Printable action items:**

Petition for [Illinois marriage advisory referendum](#)  
Instructions for [collecting petition signatures](#) (not final)