

Nev. group pushes for marriage equality

By Yesenia Amaro, Las Vegas Review-Journal

There's a new group in Nevada, and its goal is to establish marriage equality in the state in 2016 or sooner.

Freedom Nevada, a nonprofit coalition, this month formed a statewide 20-member advisory committee that includes lawmakers, attorneys, religious organizations and equal opportunity organizations, among others.

"People have a fundamental right to form families," said Bishop Dan T. Edwards with the Episcopal Diocese of Nevada, which has taken "heat" for its position of this issue. "This is a matter of civil rights when it comes to state law."

Those on the committee will lay the groundwork to rally state voters to say "yes" in 2016 to a ballot measure allowing all couples, including same-sex couples, to have the freedom to marry.

The effort is modeled on similar work that has proved successful in states such as Maryland, Maine and Washington, where voters approved same-sex marriage ballot measures, organizers said.

In 2013, the Nevada Legislature approved Senate Joint Resolution 13 to amend the state's constitution to recognize all marriages, regardless of gender. The legislation would need to be approved by lawmakers again during the 2015 legislative session before going to the voters in 2016.

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