Resolution to Oppose the Proposed Constitutional Amendment Banning Civil Unions and Marriage for Gay and Lesbian Citizens of Wisconsin

Whereas, both branches of the state of Wisconsin Legislature, the assembly and the senate, have approved a joint resolution to amend the state's constitution by creating a new section 13 of article XIII with the following language:

*Only a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in this state. A legal status identical or substantially similar to that of marriage for unmarried individuals shall not be valid or recognized in this state.*

And, whereas such legislation would further intolerance and thus have significant and far-reaching societal consequences,

And, whereas current federal, state, and university legislation broadly and specifically prohibit both harassment and discrimination,

And, whereas the recruitment and retention of high-quality faculty, staff, and students is predicated on an inclusive climate that supports all individuals,

And, whereas it is unclear what impact this amendment will have on the ability of public and private sector employers to offer domestic partner benefits, thereby making it even more difficult to recruit and retain high-quality faculty and staff,

And, whereas a very similar constitutional amendment in the state of Michigan is being used by the promoters of that amendment and others as a basis for court litigation attempting to force the University of Michigan to stop offering domestic partner benefits, despite prior statements by the promoters of the amendment that such an outcome was not the intention of the amendment,

And, whereas such legislation is inconsistent with the University’s values and commitment to provide a broad contemporary education to its students,

And, whereas, the amendment is an extreme measure that would enshrine discrimination and reinforce intolerance against one group of people,

Be it therefore resolved that

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Issues Advisory Committee stands in opposition to the Wisconsin Legislature's joint resolution supporting the above quoted constitutional amendment in that by narrowly defining marriage and denying “legal status identical or substantially similar to that of marriage for unmarried individuals” in the state, the joint resolution represents a dangerous erosion of protection against discrimination. The Committee calls on the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee to join us in opposing this amendment and help maintain Wisconsin as a state that is dedicated to equal protection under the law.