

March 3, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner:

We write to express our grave concern over the Department of Justice's decision to no longer defend Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) against legal challenges. We are very troubled by the Obama Administration's decision to no longer protect the traditional definition of marriage and defend existing law. Because DOMA is so crucial to our society, by protecting its cornerstone institution, we urge the House of Representatives to take leadership in defending DOMA in the federal courts. Specifically, we ask that the House intervene as a party in all cases where DOMA is challenged, not merely to file *amicus curiae* briefs. Though such action would be unusual, it would be both lawful and warranted under our current legal system and political context.

As you are surely aware, DOMA was passed in 1996 by strong, bipartisan majorities. The law is crucial because it gives states the authority to make their own decisions regarding the recognition of marriages, and defines marriage at the federal level as "a legal union between one man and one woman," preventing the federal government from recognizing same-sex "marriages." While the traditional definition of marriage has faced legal and popular challenges of late, a clear majority of Americans oppose same-sex "marriage" and have expressed their support of marriage as the union of one man and one woman in all 31 state referenda and initiatives where the issue has been raised. The definition of marriage is one of the central questions facing our society today. The American people do not want their wishes being overruled by the judiciary—or the executive.

By choosing to no longer defend DOMA in federal court because it believes the law to be unconstitutional, the Obama Administration has undermined the rule of law and the separation of powers. The House has the authority to rectify this lapse in judgment. We implore you to lead the House to take the important, necessary step to protect American law, American families, and American values by defending DOMA and protecting the true meaning of marriage.

Sincerely,

Dr. Richard Land
President
The Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission
Southern Baptist Convention

Leith Anderson
President
National Association of Evangelicals

Dr. Glenn C. Burris, Jr.
President
The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel

Most Rev. Salvatore J. Cordileone
Bishop of Oakland
Chairman, Ad Hoc Committee on the Defense of
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The Most Rev. Robert Duncan
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Dr. Tarunjit Singh (Butalia)
Secretary General
World Sikh Council - America Region (WSC-AR)