



June 1, 2014

Throughout the campaign for marriage equality, we heard the stories of LGBT couples across Illinois – couples from all walks of life, couples with children, couples who had been together for decades. Those couples wanted to be able to care for and protect their families through marriage.

A robust debate occurred last year over whether all Illinois couples and families should be treated equally and with dignity under the law. Today, as we celebrate the official commencement of the Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act, we honor those officials who stood for freedom and equality.

We also remember those public figures, like Bruce Rauner, who chose the side of bigotry and intolerance.

Rauner, the Republican candidate for governor, claims to be a social moderate. In public and in the media, he claims not to “have a social agenda” and that “it doesn’t matter” how he feels about marriage equality.

Rauner can’t have it both ways. A real leader takes a stand. But we now know how he really feels. Last year at a Tea Party gathering in Quincy, he had this to say about marriage equality: “They haven't approved it in a referendum, ***so if I were governor I would veto.***”

Rauner opposes the freedom to marry. If he had been Governor, the many couples across Illinois who today are celebrating new families would still be relegated to a second-class legal status. Bruce Rauner, as he said in Quincy, has no problem with that.

We know the real Bruce Rauner. His administration would very likely be working behind-the-scenes to block new legislation and erode the existing laws protecting our families.

Just look at the GOP “top of the ticket” and the elected officials Rauner surrounds himself with, like running mate Evelyn Sanguinetti and U.S. Senate candidate Jim Oberweis, both of who strongly oppose the freedom to marry, LGBT family adoption rights and other legal protections. Moreover, he has given tens of thousands of dollars to anti-LGBT candidates throughout our state.

The record is clear: LGBT couples and their families will not be welcome in Bruce Rauner’s Illinois. All of us, friends and family alike, must remember who really stands with the LGBT community this November.

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