

Statements by U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley regarding Iowa's same-sex marriage debate

- [Click here to listen to an interview with Trent Rice of KASI Radio in Ames](#)
- [Click here to listen to an interview with Bryan Nichols and Mike Savage on KBUR in Burlington](#)

Here are stories from Radio Iowa and the Associated Press about Senator Grassley's position.

Grassley says his stance on gay marriage is clear

[Tuesday, April 14, 2009](#), 11:28 AM

By [Matt Kelley](#)

Senator Chuck Grassley annoyed some fellow Republicans last week by not voicing immediate support for an effort to thwart same-sex marriage in Iowa. Grassley reportedly said he'd first need to think for a month before offering his opinion about an effort to amend the state constitution to ban gay marriage.

Grassley tells Radio Iowa, his feelings on the issue should be clear. Grassley says, "I think everybody, conservative or liberal, knows where I stand on the issue of gay marriage."

He says his record on the issue is already established. "I voted for a constitutional amendment within the last three or four years that defined marriage as between a man and a woman," Grassley says.

"Prior to that, I voted for a bill that's called The Defense of Marriage Act that is now the law of the land and was signed by President Clinton." He says it's the absolute right of Iowans to change the constitution. "Iowans ought to have their say," Grassley says. "They ought to be able to decide."

Grassley says, "I wonder why we even have to defend marriage considering the fact that it's been the foundation of our society, meaning the family, and the family, meaning one man and one woman, have been the foundation of our societies for six-thousand years."

Earlier this month, the Iowa Supreme Court ruled as unconstitutional the state law that defines the only legal marriages in Iowa are those between a man and a woman.

Based on that ruling, the first same-sex marriages are expected to be held in Iowa starting April 27th. Grassley says his comment about waiting a month to voice his opinion on the issue was in reference to plotting strategy for how best to move forward.

"It doesn't take me a month to make up my mind that I disagree with the Supreme Court case because I've done that years ago," Grassley says. "Not necessarily anticipating how the Iowa Supreme Court would rule, in fact, I'm kind of shocked how they would rule."

Grassley says he was hesitant to comment on the same-sex marriage issue initially as he was accused of meddling in state legislative affairs a few years ago by statehouse Republicans after it seemed he was trying to tell them how to vote on an ethanol bill.

<http://www.radioiowa.com/gestalt/go.cfm?objectid=A576B38B-5056-B82A-37CF4801395CA676>

Grassley: let's build a bipartisan coalition to fight same-sex marriage

[Thursday, April 16, 2009](#), 9:30 PM

By [O.Kay Henderson](#)

Senator Chuck Grassley says he wants to help develop a longterm plan to respond to this month's Iowa Supreme Court ruling which legalized gay marriage in the state.

"I would like to consult with Republican leaders...in the legislature. I'd like to consult with bipartisan groups outside the legislature," Grassley says. "...An issue like this has a great deal of bipartisan concern."

Grassley has supported an amendment to the federal constitution which would ban gay marriage. Grassley came under fire last week for saying he wanted to take a month to consider the issue before making a public statement as to whether he backed an amendment to the state constitution which would ban same-sex marriage.

"You probably know one time when I came to the Iowa legislature and demanded that the Republican leaders make ethanol (fuel use) a mandate. I have adopted recently since then -- when they told me to go back to Washington and worry about my own business -- of consulting with Republican leaders and so I'm in a position to consult with them and find out where I can be helpful," Grassley says. "I think we have to do it in very much a consensus way."

According to Grassley, it will be important to build a "bipartisan coalition" of Iowans who will pursue action at the state level. "And I don't think it should be planned just for this year or next year because this legislature's about over," Grassley says. "I think you ought to plan what you're going to do now; what are you going to do for the next legislature and then assuming you're successful there...afterwards, are you going to have the normal general election or a special election?"

If legislators approve a resolution which places the constitutional amendment before voters, that issue could be placed on the general election ballot in November of 2012; or a special election could be scheduled earlier that year solely on that issue.

Some conservative Republicans were angry with Grassley's reluctance to immediately state his support for an anti-gay marriage amendment to the state constitution, suggesting it's proof Grassley's drifting away from conservative causes. Grassley rejects that.

"Nothing's changed in the years I've been in the United States Senate. I've always been a spokesman for conservatism," Grassley says. "...I voted for the Defense of Marriage Act. I'm on the record strongly for traditional marriage, so where might the differences come with social conservatives, as an example?"

Grassley made his comments tonight during taping of the Iowa Public Television program, "Iowa Press." The program will be broadcast statewide Friday night at 7:30.

<http://www.radioiowa.com/gestalt/go.cfm?objectid=B1EB1C45-5056-B82A-377E3C1919190E92>

The Associated Press State & Local Wire

April 17, 2009 Friday 5:08 PM GMT

Grassley: Think long-term in gay marriage fight

BYLINE: By MIKE GLOVER, Associated Press Writer

SECTION: STATE AND REGIONAL

LENGTH: 502 words

DATELINE: JOHNSTON Iowa

U.S. Sen. Charles Grassley said conservatives opposed to the Iowa Supreme Court's gay marriage ruling should focus on long-term planning.

Grassley acknowledged he's taking a lower profile on the issue than some Republicans, but he said that's because a bipartisan approach is needed.

Speaking Thursday night during a taping of the public television program "Iowa Press," Grassley argued gay marriage opponents should look toward the next election and future legislative sessions.

"It ought to be thoroughly planned," said Grassley. "I don't think it should be planned for just this year or next year, because this Legislature is about over. I think you ought to plan what you are going to do for the next election, for the next Legislature."

Democratic leaders in the Legislature have opposed beginning the process of amending the Iowa Constitution to overrule the state Supreme Court's April 3 decision. Two consecutive

General Assemblies must approve a proposed constitutional amendment before it could be put to voters.

Grassley said social conservatives should begin building the political base needed to deal with the court's decision.

“If there's going to be any action taken contrary to the Supreme Court's decision, then it should be to seek as broad a consensus as possible,” he said.

The four-term Republican senator said gay marriage opponents should realize the issue doesn't break along partisan lines.

“I think we need to consult with groups that tend to be bipartisan if there's going to be any sort of action,” he said.

Grassley said he would serve a consulting role for state politicians seeking to deal with the decision, but he wouldn't impose his views on them.

Grassley predicted the gay marriage issue would gain momentum from the Iowa Supreme Court decision.

“My take on the decision is it is probably more sweeping than anybody anticipated,” he said. “It has probably set a pattern for other Supreme Courts.”

The 75-year-old Grassley is seeking re-election, and Democrats have yet to find a high-profile opponent. Former state legislator Bob Krause, of Fairfield, has said he intends to oppose Grassley.

Despite his somewhat muted response to the Supreme Court ruling, Grassley said he's confident of his standing with the conservative base of the Republican Party.

“Nothing has changed in the years I've been in the United States Senate,” said Grassley. “I've always been a spokesman for conservatism.”

Grassley has been able to negotiate a split within the Republican Party, where moderates and social conservatives have fought for control of the party's direction. He said he's confident of unity heading into next year's election.

“There is a united Republican Party that is united in outrage about what is going on in Washington,” said Grassley.

Grassley said his votes against the bailout of General Motors, and opposition to a stimulus package backed by President Barack Obama cemented his standing with conservatives.