



## Supporters of marriage equality re-elected in Massachusetts

Despite efforts by Massachusetts Republican Governor Mitt Romney to make same-sex marriage a wedge issue in the Massachusetts state legislative elections, all of the incumbent state legislators in Massachusetts who supported equality for same-sex couples and voted against an anti-gay marriage amendment last winter were re-elected Tuesday, November 2. In addition, of eight open legislative seats where a pro-equality candidate faced an anti-gay candidate, six of the eight seats were won by the pro-equality candidates. The Republican Party lost three seats in the state legislature, one of its seven State Senate seat (out of 40) and two of its 22 House seats (out of 160). The state GOP spent about \$3 million on the legislative races.

Incumbent State Senator Marion Walsh—who represents a heavily Catholic and socially conservative district in Boston and some western suburbs—beat back a challenge by a candidate who made his opposition to marriage equality his major issue. “I acknowledged straight on that I’m not going to take people’s civil rights away,” Walsh said, “that I’m not going to change the constitution.” Walsh received nearly 65% of the vote yesterday, according to the *Boston Globe*.

While no anti-equality incumbents were defeated yesterday, two incumbents who supported the anti-gay marriage amendment were defeated in the Democratic primaries in September. Carl Sciortino, an openly gay challenger who defeated incumbent Democrat Representative Vincent Ciampa in the primary, beat back a write-in campaign by Ciampa by a two-to-one margin. Ciampa’s write-in campaign included extreme anti-gay and xenophobic mailings and claims. Ciampa voted for the anti-gay amendment, despite having many gay and progressive constituents. In addition, Steven Canessa defeated anti-gay incumbent Rep. Mark Howland in September.

Several anti-marriage incumbents, including Rep. Shirley Gomes of Cape Cod and Sen. Scott Brown, who represents a district south of Boston, barely won re-election over pro-equality challengers.

These election results demonstrate that support for equal treatment of same-sex couples need not be an election liability, and that constituents will re-elect pro-marriage incumbents. They make it more likely that legislators will reject, in the 2005-2006 session, efforts to reverse the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruling in support of marriage equality for same-sex couples.

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*Founded in 1973, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Foundation (the Task Force) was the first national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) civil rights and advocacy organization and remains the movement's leading voice for freedom, justice, and equality. We work to build the grassroots political strength of our community by training state and local activists and leaders, working to strengthen the infrastructure of state and local allies, and organizing broad-based campaigns to build public support for complete equality for LGBT people. Our Policy Institute, the community's premiere think tank, provides research and policy analysis to support the struggle for complete equality. As part of a broader social justice movement, we work to create a world that respects and makes visible the diversity of human expression and identity where all people may fully participate in society. Headquartered in Washington, DC, we also have offices in New York City, Los Angeles, and Cambridge. The Task Force is a 501(c)(3) corporation incorporated in Washington, DC. Contributions to the Task Force are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law. <http://www.TheTaskForce.org>*

*The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Inc. ("NGLTF, Inc."), founded in 1974, works to build the grassroots political power of the LGBT community to win complete equality. We do this through direct and grassroots lobbying to defeat anti-LGBT ballot initiatives and legislation and pass pro-LGBT legislation and other measures. We also analyze and report on the positions of candidates for public office on issues of importance to the LGBT community. NGLTF, Inc. is a 501(c)(4) non-profit corporation incorporated in New York. Contributions to NGLTF, Inc. are not tax-deductible.*