couples from every state in the Union are ready to fly to Hawaii and find "chapels"or Justices of the Peace to marry them. They will then return to their home states and demand recognition of these marriages from their state and local governments, from their employers, from the courts, from their churches (and from you)!

The worst news is that these demands have a good chance of succeeding. Under what is known as the "Full Faith and Credit" clause of the U.S. Constitution, each state is required to recognize the "Public Acts, Records and Judicial Proceedings" of every other state (Article IV, Section 1). States that refuse to recognize these Hawaiian "marriage" licenses as valid are likely to find themselves being sued in court, with the outcome uncertain. Unbelievably, the action of a single court—or even a single judge—in Hawaii could lead to a revolution that undoes the sanctity of the marriage bond in every corner of the United States.

We must not—and cannot—allow this to happen! When Hawaii's Supreme Court ruled in 1993, FRC responded with alerts and issue papers pointing out the devastating impact that would follow. We and other groups encouraged states to respond by reaffirming the traditional definition of marriage to insulate it from attack. The word has spread rapidly, and a wide coalition of religious and family groups and legislators of all political persuasions is currently pushing for marriage protection laws.

Such laws have now been enacted in at least eleven states, and more may be signed into law by the time you read this. In addition, the Congress of the United States is set to respond to this challenge. With FRC's help and through the dedicated efforts of legal experts on Capitol Hill, legislation has been introduced to protect marriage in federal law. This legislation is called the Defense of Marriage Act, or DOMA. It was introduced in the House of Representatives on May 7 by Reps. Steve Largent (R-Okla.) and Bob Barr (R-Ga.). Senate introduction of the legislation followed on May 8 with Don Nickles (R-Okla.) and Bob Dole (R-Kans.) as co-sponsors. The respective bill numbers are H.R.3396 and S.1740.

Make no mistake, this bill is vitally needed. Sen. Dan Coats (R-Ind.) issued a powerful statement endorsing the bill and explaining the importance of marriage. His quote is worth sharing at length:

> *Marriage is the institution that civilizes our society by humanizing our lives. It is the social, legal and spiritual relationship that prepares the next generation for its duties and opportunities. An 1884 decision of the Supreme Court called it "the sure foundation of all that is stable and noble in our civilization."*
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> *The definition of marriage is not created by politicians and judges, and it cannot be changed by them. It is rooted in our history, in our laws, our deepest moral and religious convictions, and our nature as human beings. It is the union of one man and one woman. This fact can be respected or resented, but it can't be altered.*
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> *The institution of marriage is our most valuable cultural inheritance. It is our duty—perhaps our first duty—to pass it intact to the future . . . It is amazing and disturbing that the debate should even be necessary. It is a sign of the times, and an indication of a deep moral confusion. But events have made the definition of traditional marriage essential. The preservation of marriage has become an issue of self-preservation for our society.*

With Senator Coats' words, the case for marriage rests. Be assured that the Family Research Council will continue to work with him and other like-minded legislators in both parties to secure passage of this bill as soon as possible—before a final decision is reached by the Supreme Court in Hawaii. Americans need to be heard before our courts intervene and disturb yet another legal ideal. Our goal is that DOMA will swiftly reach President Clinton's desk and that he will have no choice but to sign it into law.

The need for passage of this bill could not be more urgent. On May 20, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the state of Colorado's Amendment 2, which would have blocked special rights for homosexuals. One leader of the homosexual movement bragged, "This is a joyous day for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Americans."

Please join with us in this effort. Use the enclosed card, or call us at 1-800-225-4008, to obtain a free copy of our information packet on saving the institution of marriage. Take note of the enclosed copy of the full-page advertisement we placed in the May 19 *Washington Post.* Feel free to make copies or contact us to arrange for you to run this ad in your local newspaper.

Be assured that your prayers and financial support of the work of the Family Research Council are what sustain us. Your involvment and commitment to FRC will enable us to continue in our efforts to defend the divine institution of marriage. As always, thank you for your friendship, and may God bless you.

Sincerely,

Gary L. Bauer

Gary L. Bauer
President