

## With So Much Unfinished Business, Why Is Congress Debating Previously Defeated Gay Marriage Amendment Again?

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Contact: Kimberly Allen, (202) 226-8364; (202) 420-1524 [cell]

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Yesterday, the House of Representatives voted on whether the U.S. Constitution should be amended to ban gay marriage. In the last two years, the Senate and House have both rejected this amendment. Congressman Steve Rothman's (D-NJ) statement follows:

"Congress should handle serious business&mdash;not poke its nose into states' issues and individuals' private lives. Gay marriage is known as a 'wedge issue' because it is intended to divide Americans. Yet, at a time of war, with gas prices exceeding \$3 per gallon in many places, and record deficits, this wedge issue was the number one problem that the Republican Majority in Congress could find to tackle. Enough is enough!

"We need new leadership in Congress that will pass legislation meant to help people - not divide them. We should increase the minimum wage, fully implement all of the 9/11 Commission's security recommendations, discuss growing nuclear threats around the world, and eliminate the billions of dollars in subsidies for oil and gas companies and use the savings to invest in alternative fuels made in America. Yesterday's vote called by the Republican Majority&mdash;the fourth vote on this issue in two years&mdash;makes it clear that we need a new direction for America and we need it now."

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