

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:** Jeff Caruso, Director

Virginia Catholic Conference

804-225-8565

**VIRGINIA CATHOLIC CONFERENCE URGES CONTINUED PUSH FOR  
CONSTITUTIONAL MARRIAGE PROTECTIONS**

Yesterday, a proposed constitutional amendment, providing that only the union of a man and a woman shall be legally recognized as a marriage, failed in the U.S. Senate. A vote to end debate and bring the measure to a final vote fell 11 short of the 60 votes required, and 18 votes short of the two-thirds majority needed for passage.

The measure was strongly supported by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the Virginia Catholic Conference (VCC) collaborated with state Knights of Columbus leaders to facilitate grassroots advocacy on the issue within parishes. The VCC is the public-policy representative of the Catholic bishops serving the Arlington and Richmond dioceses.

“Yesterday's vote in the U.S. Senate demonstrates how vital the need is for a marriage protection amendment to Virginia’s constitution,” said VCC Director Jeff Caruso. “With no federal remedy in sight to preserve the institution of marriage, Virginia voters will have an especially important opportunity to cast their own votes on this critical issue in November.” On a positive note, Caruso also observed that Virginia’s two U.S. Senators, John Warner and George Allen, both voted in favor of bringing the proposed amendment to a final roll call. He said their votes reflected “a favorable response to the large number of constituents who sent them postcards printed by the Knights of Columbus.”

In the months ahead, the Virginia bishops will offer parishes educational materials on the proposed state marriage-protection amendment.

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