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Governor Christie on Same-Sex Marriage: Let the People of New Jersey Decide

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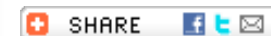
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TRANSCRIPT

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie: This issue that our state is exploring – whether or not to redefine hundreds of years of societal and religious traditions – should not be decided by 121 people in the State House in Trenton.

The fact is we're discussing huge change and I believe we need to approach this not only in a thoughtful way, not in a rushed way, but also in a way where we're able to get the most input that we can from the public.

So, if New Jersey is seriously looking to overturn hundreds of years of societal, legal and religious tradition, we need to give the issue the weight that it merits.

So, I think that this is not an issue that should rest solely in my hands, in the hands of the Senate President, or in the hands of the Speaker or the other 118 members of the Legislature.

Let's let the people of New Jersey decide what is right for the state.

Let's put the question of same-sex marriage on the ballot this fall, in the hands of the people, at the time where the most people will be voting, in the presidential election year.

I support giving New Jerseyans the ability to give voice to their support or their opposition to this issue.

We have an opportunity now to take away political maneuvering and political advantage and the inherent issues that existed the last time this issue was before the legislature when it failed.

Let's make sure that political maneuvering is not what judges this, and let's make sure this is not just someone trying to have fun and create a campaign issue. It's too serious – the institution of marriage is too serious to be treated like a political football.

So, my message to the Legislature – and this is simple – and I'm doing it today because today is the first day they're beginning to consider it. Let's stop treating this like a political football and let's let the people of New Jersey decide.

That way those who are in favor, those who are opposed, will have the opportunity to make their case over the next nine months to the people of New Jersey. And then, in the year when the most people will be voting, we get a decision. And the people decide whether or not they believe same-sex marriage should exist in this State or not.

I would certainly be willing to be governed by the decision of the people this State, especially in a year that the most people will be voting in the State.

And I would hope that the legislature would be willing to trust the people, the way I'm willing to trust the people.

This issue is too big and too consequential not to trust the people who will be governed ultimately by any change in law or maintenance of the current law.

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