

Convention on the Constitution Votes in favour of Same Sex Marriage

14th April, 2013: The Convention on the Constitution met over two days this weekend to report recommendations to the Houses of the Oireachtas on constitutional provision for same-sex marriage.

The Convention decided to recommend that the Constitution be changed to allow for civil marriage for same-sex couples by:

- Yes - **79%**
- No - **19%**
- No opinion – **1%**

The members of the Convention were also asked what form the amendment should take. Delegates were given the option of voting that the amendment be:

- permissive ('the State may enact laws providing for same-sex marriage');
- directive ('the State shall enact laws providing for same-sex marriage');

On this matter the Convention decided:

- Permissive – **17%**
- Directive – **78%**
- No opinion – **1%**

A final question asked delegates if they agreed, disagreed or had no opinion that 'having regard to the changed arrangements in relation to marriage, the State shall enact laws incorporating changed arrangements in regard to the parentage, guardianship and the upbringing of children'.

On this question the Convention decided:

- Yes – **81%**
- No – **12%**
- No opinion – **2%**

A report will now be drafted and the recommendations of the Constitutional Convention will now go to Government.

After the report is officially sent to the Oireachtas, the Government are committed to responding within four months by way of a debate in the Oireachtas and if it agrees with the recommendation to amend the Constitution, to include a timeframe for a referendum.

Chairman of the Constitutional Convention, Mr Tom Arnold, said:

“I would like to thank all of the participants who contributed to the Constitutional Convention’s same-sex marriage discussion. I am very pleased that proceedings were conducted in a fair and transparent manner with all sides getting an opportunity to make their respective cases. This weekend’s discussions have been both passionate and thoughtful, both heartfelt and rigorous.”

“Throughout this process, citizens were actively encouraged to engage with the issue of same-sex marriage and make their views known through the website and by other means. There was an unprecedented response from the public and over 1000 submissions were considered by the Convention.”

“Following this outcome, we will now be lodging a formal report with Government notifying them of the recommendation of the Convention regarding same-sex marriage in Ireland.”

The next meeting of the Constitutional Convention will consider the Dáil electoral system and the way in which we elect our politicians.

ENDS

For More Information, Please Contact:

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Notes to the Editor

Constitutional Convention

The Convention on the Constitution was established by Resolution of both Houses of the Oireachtas. Its purpose is to consider and deliberate on eight separate matters on which it will make recommendations [as possible future amendments to the Constitution] and report to the Houses of the Oireachtas.

For its part, the Irish Government has undertaken to respond to the Convention's recommendations within four months by way of debates in the Oireachtas and where it agrees with a particular recommendation to amend the Constitution, to include a timeframe for a referendum.

The Convention is to complete its work within 12 months. Each topic will be deliberated at a weekend meeting of the Convention.

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