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## Equality At Last: Illinois To Become 15th State To Legalize Gay Marriage



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Sara Feigenholtz joined 60 other Illinois House of Representative members in legalizing gay marriage. PHOTO: Reuters

Illinois is a few procedural steps from legalizing gay marriage after the Illinois State House narrowly passed a bill to bring the Midwestern state from a civil union state to a full marriage equality state. The House vote was seen as the last hurdle for Illinois to become the 15<sup>th</sup> state to legalize gay marriage. The bill got 61 votes, just one more than was needed for passage. The bill now goes back to the Illinois Senate for final approval. The Senate previously passed a version of the bill to legalize same-sex marriage, and they are expected to vote again tonight. Governor Pat Quinn has said that he will sign the bill.

It's worth noting that, though the politics are clearly trending toward gay marriage becoming legal in more and more states, Illinois will be only the 15<sup>th</sup> out of 50 to have full marriage equality. The success of the same-sex marriage movement feels inevitable, but it ain't over till it's over. Even in solidly Democratic Illinois, the bill only just squeaked through in the House.

The same advocates and activists who pushed the gay marriage cause when it was unpopular (not so long ago) will see it through to the end now that it seems inevitable. Without them, gay marriage could languish, despite its popular support. Someday soon, gay marriage will be legal in every blue and purple state, and the red ones will fall one by one. That will happen because people have fought hard to bring us to this point, and they aren't giving up now.

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