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Fernando Mojica and Drew Freeman, who became engaged today, celebrate during a champagne toast at Sidetrack club in Chicago to mark the passage of same-sex marriage in Illinois on Tuesday, Nov 5, 2013. (Brian Cassella/Chicago Tribune)

Read a Foster Child's Plea for Gay Marriage

By **Emmet Sullivan**

On November 5, the Illinois House passed a bill legalizing gay marriage, becoming the 15th state in America to recognize same-sex marriage.

The bill passed after almost a year of debate in the legislature (the state senate passed the original bill, SB10, on Valentine's Day of this year). During the final debate, state representative Sara Feigenholtz read a letter from a constituent that received a sustained round of applause from the audience.

It was from a young girl, around the age of 10, who had been in the foster care system until her two dads "saved" her. The girl wrote to state legislators to urge them to vote for marriage equality.

Representative Feigenholtz's office sent over the letter, which appears transcribed and as an original image below:

Why my dads should be married!!!

Love is important! It doesn't matter who people love as long as they're happy. Every one should be able to marry who they want to. You may not like it but to them it's normal.

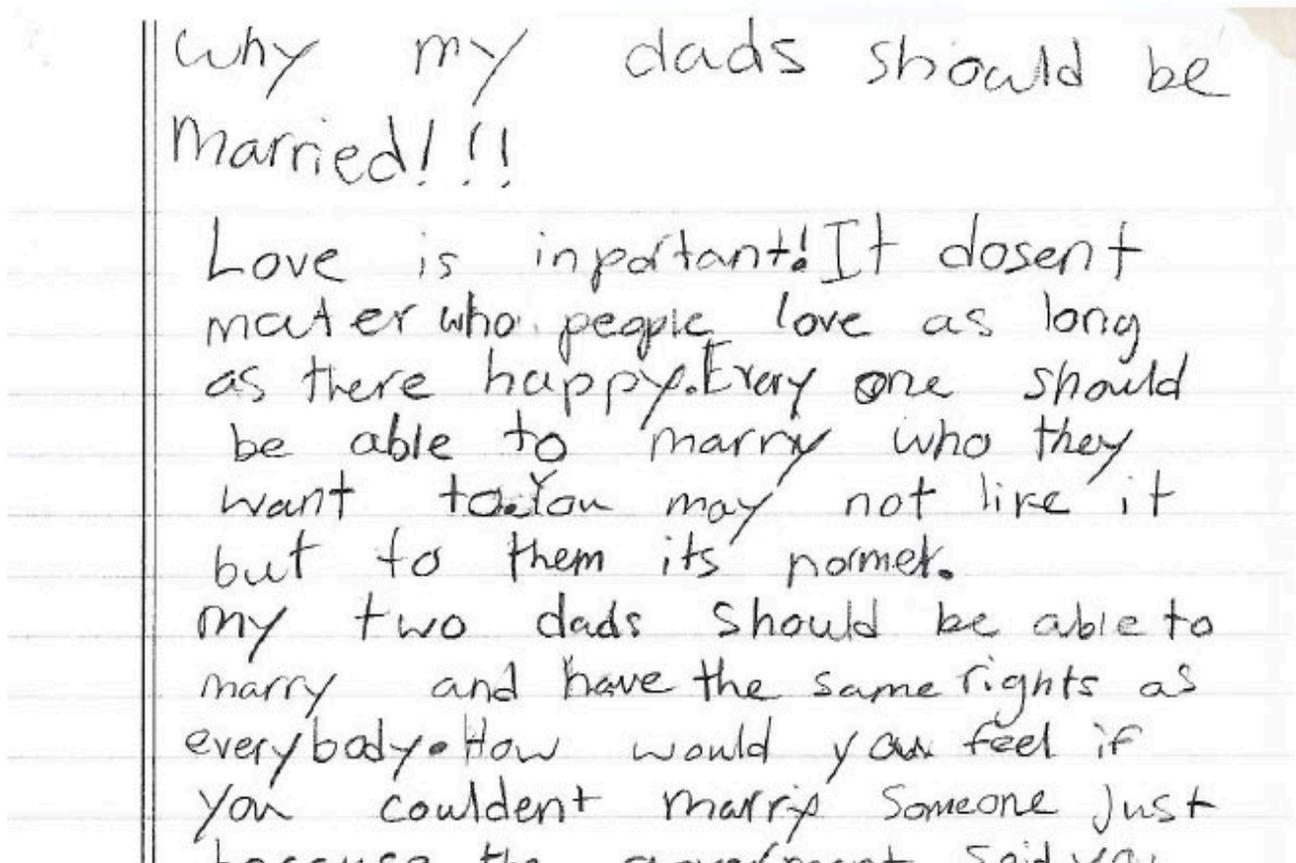
My two dads should be able to marry and have the same rights as everybody. How would you feel if you couldn't marry someone just because the government said you weren't allowed to. If I loved someone and wasn't allowed to marry them I'd be pretty upset. My family taught me that even if you don't agree with someone, you should still be kind and respectful. The government should do that. Also my church tells me that you should treat other people you want to be treated.

My dads are very unique we do lots of silly things like drink hot cocoa every time it snows. Every summer we go to the same place in Florida with one of my dad's whole family. My family knows how to have fun. We do lots of road trips. Also we have gone on cruises. I really enjoy traveling with my dads...when anywhere with my dads are fun. One of my favorite things to do with my family is game night. I LOVE this family and every single thing we do as a family.

Before I lived with my two dads my life was horrible. My old family never treated me well. They wouldn't stand up for me. If my foster sister fought with me my old mom would just sit there and watch me get hurt so I would have to fight back. Each time I was at a foster home they promised me they'd treat me and my brother equally. They always broke their promises. I left 5 times until I found my two dads. They also promised that they would keep me safe and equal. Now I'm 10 and they still keep their promises. They do so much for me they never hurt me or my brother. I feel so safe. I believe I can do anything with my two dads.

The letter concludes: "Will you let my dad's be married?" There are two hand drawn boxes—one for yes and one for no.

Here's a scan of the child's original letter.



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