Dear ,

As you might know our state’s primary takes place on May 8th. Amongst voting for presidential and gubernatorial candidates, we will also have the chance to vote on a proposed constitutional amendment to the North Carolina Constitution referred to as “Amendment 1”. The contents of this amendment state that marriage between one man and one woman is the only domestic legal union that will be recognized by the state of North Carolina.

Same-sex marriage is already illegal in the state of North Carolina. Passage of this amendment will not change that. What it will change is the status of all other civil unions and domestic partnerships in North Carolina – heterosexual and otherwise. How? The phrase “domestic legal union” found in the Amendment is not defined anywhere in North Carolina law. Due to the vague and unprecedented wording, this definition is up to interpretation by the state courts – leading to longer sessions and greater expenditure of taxpayer money – your money.

You might think that passage of this amendment will not affect you, and you might be correct.  What it will affect is the University as a whole and its ability to attract the best and most qualified faculty – who might not want to live in North Carolina if these rights are denied to them. Large companies such as SAS and Bank of America in addition to over 70 other NC CEO’s have gone on the record stating that this amendment prevents North Carolina from attracting a competitive workforce. Companies that offer benefits to couples in civil unions can no longer sanction them – which can range from little things like parking passes to major benefits like healthcare. In addition to that, passage of Amendment One will affect the children of those in civil unions – they will legally be recognized as the child of only one member of the couple. Also, victims of domestic violence would no longer be able to receive the protection currently granted to them as cohabitation will not be recognized as a “domestic legal union”.

When former slaves were allowed their basic human rights as per the Fourteenth Amendment of the United States Constitution, it was not put to a popular vote. Indeed, it can be interpreted that NC Amendment One is in direct violation of the Due Process Clause found in the aforementioned US Amendment. There is no reason to have these words stand as a smear on our beloved state Constitution. We encourage you to get out to the polls and Early Vote between now and May 5th(conveniently located on campus above at Ram’s Head Parking Deck), and again on Election Day, May 8th, and please Vote Against Amendment One. If you have any questions, feel free to contact us at *voteagainst@unc.edu.*

Thanking you,