



## Don't Take the Granite State for Granted

*As the battle over marriage heats up in New Hampshire, retiring bishop V. Gene Robinson vows to never stop preaching for equality*

**“LIVE FREE OR DIE.”** You can't find a more bottom-line state motto. So why is New Hampshire's recent push to live up to its official rhetoric under attack?

Since the state passed a marriage equality bill in 2009, same-sex marriage foes have been plotting to undo the achievement as they wage their nationwide assault. Though most observers don't expect any serious movement this year on repeal legislation—strongly opposed by New Hampshire residents in a February poll—a reversal on marriage equality is by no means impossible. State Republicans, who control both houses of the legislature with veto-proof majorities, haven't ruled out a future push. And anti-gay marriage groups are spending considerable time, money, and resources in the state for another good reason: New Hampshire kicks off the presidential primary season early next year. What better forum to force a response on the issue from GOP candidates? Fred Karger, the gay political consultant turned activist, is a lone wolf in publicly supporting marriage equality among potential Republican candidates making preliminary trips to the New England state. And he's hardly likely to win the nomination.

One of the state's most visible residents, the Right Reverend V. Gene Robinson, thinks groups like the National Organization for Marriage have chosen the wrong state for their anti-gay platform. “I think it's clear the arguments that marriage is being undermined by [same-sex marriage] just aren't true, and I don't think

anybody believes such an argument combines with the New Hampshire libertarian spirit,” says Robinson, a board member for New Hampshire Freedom to Marry. “We have people here who may not be necessarily comfortable with gay marriage but who would fight to the death for your right to it.”

The first openly gay Episcopal bishop, Robinson hasn't been on the sidelines for this fight—or any sidelines—since he announced he would step down from his leadership post in 2013. In February, Robinson was a vocal critic of the National Prayer Breakfast and implored organizers of the event, the conservative group the Family, to commemorate the life and activism of David Kato, a Ugandan gay rights activist who was murdered in January. Kato failed to garner even a mention at the event, which was attended by President Barack Obama.

Which brings Robinson to another point: Isn't it time for this president, for whom the bishop spoke at his inauguration, to step up on marriage, not just in opposing legislation that would strip rights away in New Hampshire but in endorsing marriage equality nationally? (The president has told this magazine that he's “wrestling” with the issue.) “I'd like to think that was a shot across the bow, that in the near future we're going to see a change from him,” says Robinson. “People he would lose by supporting marriage are people he's already lost. And I think he would energize his base if he would do it sooner.”

### CHATTERBOX

*Josh Rosenzweig goes solo to tweak the typical talk show with his new interview program, Just Josh*

“I like to think of myself as a blend of Mike Douglas and Dinah Shore, with a sprinkle of Allan Carr thrown in there,” Josh Rosenzweig says with a chuckle. It's no wonder, then, that his new talk show, *Just Josh*, is such a giddy kick. Rosenzweig, former cohost of *here! With Josh and Sara*, runs the traditional talk show format through a modern gay filter with his brand of irreverent humor. The sometime filmmaker, who helmed a gay-themed short that riffs on the 1980s horror staple *Children of the Corn* and will make the LGBT festival rounds this summer, is a natural on both sides of the camera. The series, which currently airs on the *here!* TV cable network and *HereTV.com* (both owned by the same parent company as *The Advocate*), finds the host exchanging in lively banter with guests ranging from iconic beauty Isabella Rossellini to outré performance artist Joey Arias. “I think of my show as the anti-interview show,” Rosenzweig says. “I want to have more a conversation than an interview. Having fun and a laugh is my goal.” Rosenzweig also ventures out into the streets to explore every facet of his adopted home, New York City. “It follows my crazy interests from the ridiculous to the sublime,” he says of the show. “Hopefully, it's just fun and funny and will make people fall in love with the people, places, and things that I love.”



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