

Current Issues in Politics and Public Policy

Marriage and non-marriage play an ever-larger role in the political realm. Politicians rush to embrace "family values" but demonize unmarried families.

AtMP's approach to politics is guided by our mission statement. AtMP stands up for unmarried people in national policy debates by issuing public statements and press releases. You can read our policy statements [here](#).

This area includes:

Universal Health Care

The Alternatives to Marriage Project believes that access to health care in the United States should not be determined by relationship or marital status. Although we applaud efforts by some businesses to make health insurance more accessible (by offering domestic partnership benefits, for example), we advocate for a truly universal system that separates health care from employment.

Adoption

Adoption decisions should be based on the best interest of each individual child. But some states prevent same-sex couples or unmarried people from adopting or fostering children, no matter how well matched the child and adult(s) might be. Several states are considering proposals to ban adoption by anyone who is cohabiting. These laws hurt kids.

Federal Income Taxes

AtMP believes that individuals' incomes should be taxed without regard to their marital status. People should be free to choose whether to marry without having to calculate if marrying will make their income taxes higher or lower. The current tax structure favors upper-income married provider-dependent households, a minority among American household types. In 2004 nearly 30 million couples enjoyed marriage bonuses totaling \$49 billion (their average bonus that year was \$1,691) while nearly 18 million couples suffered marriage penalties totaling \$19.1 billion (average penalty \$1,056).

Housing

Marital status discrimination in housing is widespread, legal, and completely unfair. In about half the states in the U.S. (unless there are stronger local laws), a landlord can legally refuse to rent to an unmarried couple and a town can forbid unmarried families, roommates or extended families from living in certain neighborhoods. In a handful of states, cohabitation is a crime. These laws are not enforced consistently, and are often ignored. However, discrimination does happen, and when it does, it hurts!

Welfare and Marriage Promotion

AtMP believes that nudging, bribing, and coercing people down the aisle is an inappropriate role for government and an ineffective way to help people escape poverty. Read what we have to say on the matter.

The Marriage Movement

A loose coalition of individuals and groups calling themselves the Marriage Movement is working to strengthen the institution -- and sometimes to elevate married families above all other kinds (that's why we sometimes call it the Marriage-Only Movement). This collection of information - about the movement's goals, the dangers we see, and how we've responded - shines a special spotlight on the National Marriage Project and the Case for Marriage.

Marriage Boycott

Information about the movement of different-sex couples refusing to marry until same-sex couples have equal marriage rights, and about whole congregations refusing to conduct weddings until marriage-equality exists.