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INCLUDES PHOTOS

10,000 Gather in the State Capitol to Support Traditional Marriage

OLYMPIA, WA (May 8, 2005) - As the Washington State Supreme Court prepared to hear arguments, regarding the constitutionality of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), over 10,000 supporters gathered around Tivoli Fountain in front of the State Capitol to show their support for maintaining marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

"Washington Evangelicals for Responsible Government (WERG) and those who support this cause are part of a pro-marriage movement," said Rev. Joe Fuiten, president of WERG. "We are here to strengthen the institution of marriage and to remind the world that it is the birthright of every child to be raised by their married mother and father."

Two lower courts ruled in 2004 that the state's DOMA law, passed overwhelmingly by the state legislature in 1998, is unconstitutional. Those two cases were joined for purposes of the appeal to the state Supreme Court.

The efforts of WERG are supported by hundreds of churches, community-based groups and family policy organizations around the state, along with others like Sound the Alarm and Mayday for Marriage, which held a rally in Washington DC last October.

"It was an amazing scene -- watching busloads of people continuing to come in even while the rally was underway," event coordinator Daryl Bursch said. "The crowd just continued to swell."

But Fuiten wasn't surprised.

"This is an issue that affects the very fabric of our society," he said. "The crowd was more than we had counted on, and just what we prayed for."

"People in Washington are finally coming to realize that our state may join Massachusetts as the only two states where homosexual marriage is allowed, and they showed up today to plant the flag for marriage as we have known it through the millennia," he said.

For more information, contact Joe Fuiten at 425-770-5220.