

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: CARRIE EVANS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
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MR. COLIN BOWES: We've been delighted today to host discussions on the influence of race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation in the election process, and we're very happy this year to do something a little bit different by hosting a keynote speaker who will certainly help us tie up many of the issues that we've explored throughout the day.

As many of you know, this has been a banner year for advocates of marriage equality around the country. Back in May, President Obama substantially raised the stakes on an issue that has historically been controversial among voters by announcing his support for same sex marriage. Long before that, however, dedicated advocates in states all over the country have been fighting hard to expand marriage rights for same sex couples to various degrees of success. When Rachel and I started planning this symposium we knew about all the marriage campaigns going on around the country, but obviously had no idea how they were going to turn out. The country woke up the day after Election Day to find that voters in Maine, Washington and Maryland approved same sex marriage laws for couples in those states and voters in a fourth state, Minnesota, voted down a referendum that would have constitutionally prohibited same sex marriages.

This was monumental. To illustrate the point, recall that before this time every single state that had been presented with the question, over 30 states, had all rejected them. So this year certainly marked a major change in the political tides and this is due, of course in no small part to the tireless efforts of advocates like Carrie Evans, who I'm honored to introduce you to this afternoon.

Ms. Evans served as Equality Maryland's Director of Policy and Planning from 2007 to 2009 and returned to the organization as its Executive Director in 2011. Before that she served as a policy analyst for the Baltimore Housing Department and currently teaches for the Gender and Women's Studies Department at the University of Maryland in Baltimore County. She has also served as the state legislative director at the Human Rights Campaign and the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Undoubtedly, Carrie's unique experience and expertise lends itself to fascinating insight into exactly the kind of coalition building that is required to accomplish feats like this.

And with that, please welcome me, join me in welcoming Carrie. Thank you.
[APPLAUSE]

MS. CARRIE EVANS: The last time I was in a moot courtroom was in law

school in 1994. It was my first year of law school as Osgoode Hall, which is in Toronto. I'm a Canadian by birth. And the topic that my moot partner and me were arguing was marriage equality for same sex couples. So she went on to join the law firm that argued the successful Ontario case based on our briefs from our moot court experience. So I have good feelings about moot courtrooms, and plus our opponents really sucked, so it was good.

One of the things I liked to see when I was in law school is the different trajectories that you can take with your law degrees, and I think today you've seen a whole host of different areas that those of us with law degrees have went on to do, sometimes planned, sometimes totally accidentally, but nonetheless having the law degree has helped us whether we're practicing or not. So I'm glad to be here. I always feel right at home back in law school. And many days wish I was there during the campaign. I never thought I would say the campaign was more difficult than law school, but it actually was.

So Equality Maryland is Maryland's LGBT civil rights organization. We are 25 years old this year. And almost every state, has an LGBT civil rights organization that predominantly works on the political work, passing anti-discrimination laws, hate crimes laws and marriage equality in some cases, domestic partnerships. So we were the primary organization charged with getting marriage equality for Maryland same-sex couples. So we'll start, so and I lecture so I like when people actually ask questions as they get them because I think if you wait, unless you write them down, which you may. That may be your style, forget or we lose the moment. So if you have a question as I'm talking ask it then. I really don't mind because it just sort of becomes more contextual.

So for those of you who've taken sexual orientation and the law you know that the nineties sort of was when the major litigation started with marriage equality. Evan Wolfson, who's sort of the grandfather of marriage equality started litigating with the ACLU with the Hawaii case and Vermont cases. Then we had DOMA pass in 1996 federally, it was in this context that we had what we call some orphan bills, and those are bills that are introduced in state legislatures that aren't really supported by anybody. It's usually a well-meaning legislator that says, oh, let me do this and, like, the organizations are like, okay, and they usually don't have any co-sponsors or anything like that. Well, we had one of those great marriage heroes in 1997, Delegate Sharon Grossfeld who represents Montgomery County, and for those of you who are, the most insanely progressive, Bethesda, Chevy Chase, Takoma Park, it's just incredibly progressive. So she introduced a marriage bill in 1997 in Maryland, no co-sponsors. The bill went nowhere but it was, you know, we always remember Sharon as the first person who really, you know, took that stand in Maryland.

And so that was what happened and then we started working as a national movement in figuring out the blueprint for how were we going to win marriage in states. And there you know really only have two options, litigation or legislation.

And oftentimes litigation is the easiest and cheapest way to start and that's where we started. In 2004 the ACLU of Maryland and Equality Maryland filed a lawsuit on behalf of nine same-sex couples and one gay man who had recently lost his long-term partner. The primary argument made by the ACLU was that it was a violation of the equality provisions in Maryland's Constitution to deny same sex-couples a marriage license.

We won at the trial court level. We had a Baltimore City District judge agree with our argument, and it was appealed. In Maryland we have an intermediate appellate court called the Court of Special Appeals but our highest court is the Court of Appeals, and the Court of Appeals can grab things directly from the trial court level if they feel like they're going to get it anyways to save judicial resources or just to get the matter resolved. And so the Court of Appeals took it from the Court of Special Appeals. On September 17th, a day that we'll always remember in Maryland, 2007 the Court of Appeals in a 4-3 decision ruled against us and reversed the trial court decision stating that it was perfectly fine for the state to deny marriage licenses, that's the *Conaway v. Deane* case.

What was interesting about it is, and I think some of these panelists talked about it, about the evidence that was presented in the amicus and, the experts was that we had were overwhelming and credible. We're compiling the history of marriage in Maryland right now, and a large part of that are the briefs that were submitted because they were incredible, and how the majority really disregarded those and had in its opinion some really repugnant things about gay folks not being good parents and, you know, all the stereotypes that really we felt as advocates and as gay folks, really wasn't necessary to the decision at hand. You could just say it's unconstitutional and go on your way, but they really sort of stuck the knife in and turned it. So it gave us a fire in our belly that that made us determined with a "we'll show you" attitude.

So having lost at the court level our only option left was legislation and in 2008 we introduced the marriage bill and that was introduced by Senator Gwendolyn Britt. When you do legislation like this it's really always important to pick your sponsors wisely. We have a strong LGBT legislative caucus in Maryland. We now have eight members in it. Most people would say, well, why didn't one of them sponsor it? Well, it wasn't that they weren't capable it's just that with Senator Britt we had the right spokesperson. Gwendolyn Britt had been a civil rights icon, had integrated many places of public accommodations in Maryland, so when she said she wanted this to be her issue, of course we were going to go with that.

She unexpectedly died days before we started session in 2008, and it threw us into an entire tailspin with having prepped and, you know, thought we were ready for what was ahead of us and then to have Gwen die really was very tough. So we worked on the bill, I mean when you introduce legislation, whether it's federally or state, you don't pass a bill like this in the first year. You have to set realistic

benchmarks on what it is you want to achieve every year, whether that's increasing your co-sponsors, having 100 more people at your lobby day. You set expectations not just for yourself as advocates but for the community at hand because in 2008, we didn't want to say we're going to pass marriage and then we didn't and have the community thinking well, do you not know how to do this. It was an educational process for the community about how legislation like this is passed.

And we set these smaller goals for 2008, so 2009 and 2010. In 2011 we finally got some action and then things sort of blew up in a bad way. It didn't go to the full House floor for a vote. After this, it really became apparent that something needed to change, that we weren't doing what we needed to do. And there were several reasons for that, but the conclusion was we needed to form a coalition, that this was something that was larger than Equality Maryland and our capabilities.

And so we formed Maryland is for Marriage Equality, which became, the vehicle by which all of the marriage work was being done. So it was comprised of the Human Rights Campaign, the ACLU of Maryland, SEIU and Equality Maryland along with the Governor and a member of the House of Delegates and the Senate. At the end we had over 200 organizations, but the seven of us were sort of the driving forces of it, and formed the coalition that would move this bill and introduce it in 2012.

So that was a difficult challenge for an organization who had for almost a decade been working on this issue alone or at most with the ACLU of Maryland, now we are trying to navigate with six very powerful organizations, we were sort of the small dog now. All of the other organizations had many more resources than us, many more staff than us. In 2012 we introduced the bill, the Civil Marriage Protection Act. What's interesting is we had named it in 2008 the Civil Marriage and Religious Freedom Protection Act, and one of the things we found through the years and we actually picked up support if we took out religious freedom out of the title of the bill.

What made 2012 really different was the governor. Governor Martin O'Malley, who was formerly a Baltimore City Mayor, ascended into the governorship and was a civil unions proponent and had much to our chagrin, not seen the light on inequity of civil unions versus marriage and so he was sort of a special project of ours and working on him year after year. The Governor had his epiphany in the fall of 2011 and it was quite an epiphany because he went from just sort of being supportive to, like, feeling this run through his blood. I mean, the passion he showed for the piece of legislation was we would just, like, watch and be, like, who is this man? He made it his centerpiece of legislation last year and absolutely there was nothing he wouldn't do to ensure we had the votes to pass it.

Most of the compromising on the bill was with the religious exemption language and had happened previous to 2012. So in 2012 we had a clean bill that we tried to keep free of amendments. A few were added, but they were necessary to secure a vote.

Another sort of pivotal thing was our LGBT caucus in the legislature with eight members. The power that you get when you have lesbian and gay folks, we don't have any openly transgender people in the General Assembly, the power that they have behind those closed doors with their colleagues it just absolutely cannot be discounted. There are so many places of access that me as a lobbyist or even as a donor to campaigns just don't have. It really was these LGBT legislators who put their lives on display for their colleagues day in and day out so that their colleagues when they were getting ready to cast that vote weren't just casting a vote abstractly on marriage equality but casting a vote on Senator Rich Madaleno and his family and his two kids that they knew and, you know, saw them grow up before their eyes. And so the power of openly gay elected officials just absolutely was essential as well.

So we passed the bill and it was signed. We passed the bill fairly quickly last year and the governor signed it on March 1st. There's two intervening things I forgot I want to talk about that happened during all of this, because it's not always a clear sort of trajectory. In 2010 we had an Attorney General in Maryland. The state had all of these couples, including myself, who were being married in other jurisdictions coming back and our marriages were not being honored. And so Attorney General Gansler who's been an incredible supporter of marriage equality from the very beginning issued an opinion saying, look, there's nothing in state law that would prohibit state or public entities from honoring these marriages so you should go ahead and start. And so entities started doing that.

We had more difficulty with county-level entities doing that. Lambda Legal actually did some cases for Maryland couples, particularly county employees, law enforcement employees who were married in other jurisdictions and not being treated as spouses within their unions or within the county. So we had to litigate a bit, but it was a strong AG opinion that was affirmed by a case that just came out last summer *Port v. Cowen* that was actually a case involving a same-sex couple who had been married and now wanted to divorce and whether or not they could use the Maryland family courts to divorce. And thankfully the Court of Appeals unanimously, they never do that, said of course, you can use the courts to petition for a divorce. But in the course of that affirmed Attorney General Gansler's opinion saying regardless of what happens in November with the referendum that we have to be honoring these marriages.

So those were good things that were building up a strategy if we didn't win the referendum. We needed to have as much built-in protections for married couples who had married in other jurisdictions, especially after the District of Columbia had passed marriage equality more and more Maryland couples were married. So those things happened.

And then of course in Maryland, you guys in New York thankfully don't have this, we have a referendum process. Any newly passed law in Maryland can be petitioned for referendum to be put before voters in the next general election,

which in Maryland is every even year. The only exceptions to this are fiscal-related bills and the budget, and as much as we try to figure out how to make the marriage bill a fiscal bill we were unable to pass the muster of counsel.

So Marylanders for Marriage Equality transitioned from being the legislative workhorses to forming a campaign. And as Colin said, nobody had ever won before. And so the prospects were daunting. People often ask, did you all think about trying to challenge the signatures that were handed in? Well, in Maryland the threshold is just incredibly tiny. They only had to hand in 56,000 signatures and they had, like, 125,000 within a few months and we had the great law firm Covington and Burling in D.C. doing pro bono work and advising us on whether or not we wanted to challenge these. And they were reviewing signature sheets and concluded that we would not be able to invalidate enough signatures. So we said, "Okay, let's do this campaign."

It was the same entities, the seven folks, Equality Maryland, SEIU, HRC, ACLU of Maryland, the Governor and the Delegate and Senator were all board members and we hired a campaign manager. There's not a big pool of managers expertise. So you just pick somebody who knows how to run a really good campaign, and we were lucky Josh Levin was done with a congressional campaign in Illinois and was an incredible straight ally and said, yeah, I will come and do this.

So the biggest part, of course, in the campaign is raising the money and it was tough. We had a lot of national organizations not believing that we could win and so there was sort of a boycott of Maryland from national funders except HRC. The other three states, Washington, Maine and Minnesota did not have the same lack of confidence in them so it sort of made us, it was sort of a rallying cry for use because we said, "We'll show you," you know. And-

MALE VOICE: Why do you think funders didn't believe Maryland could win?

MS. EVANS: Mostly people felt like with the large African American electorate we have in Maryland that it was, that we were in no position to be able to get the percentage of that vote we needed to win. But you know, it was what it was and so we knew from the beginning that this was going to be a homegrown campaign. We weren't, if the national money started coming in after they saw we knew what we were doing great, but if it didn't you know what? We were going to do this on our own and we were going to amend the budget as we needed to if we weren't raising money. And we did. We started our expectations in May with a \$7 million budget and at one point in the summer downsized it to \$2.5 million based on fundraising, and that was incredibly painful. You can imagine how much needs to be cut out of a campaign when you make those kinds of adjustments. In the end we were able to raise \$6 million, but you don't know that in August. You know that everyone would say, oh, the money comes in the last couple of weeks. You'll be fine, you know? And we're, like, we can't calculate staff payroll on this theory

that people will get excited in the last two weeks, especially the organizations, we would have all been legally liable, for that so it was not something we were going to take on.

So money was a challenge. Polling, some of the people who weren't investing said our polling numbers weren't there, although we did poll almost the same and sometimes higher than Minnesota, Maine and Washington. Our polling always has been, even in 2007 after the court case between 47 and 54. We had a very big bump to 57 right after President Obama's endorsement, but it leveled out within weeks as we knew it would. But we were always in that range so we always knew we were going to probably come in at 50 to 52% and that the goal then of the campaign was to hold. Not lose any ground, and to decrease the opposition's percentage, which, you know, had a high of, I think, 49 at one point opposed to marriage equality and just chip away at that. Even if we weren't moving them over to the yes side, moving them over to the middle so that they would show as undecided voters which was always a strength for us.

So we realized that two key groups we had to really hold and work on were, of course as I said before, African American voters. Maryland has a large African American voting population that's interestingly divided into two geographical areas, and so you have to come up with a strategy for both of those populations because as any other population it's not a monolithic group. We have Baltimore which has 65% African American, predominantly working class and poor African Americans and then we have Prince George's County outside of Washington, D.C. which is the wealthiest concentration of the black middle class we have in the nation And so the strategy for both of those folks we thought would have to be different.

So of course we go in and with every campaign you have to do focus groups and finding out the right messages and messengers. When we worked on this issue in 2008, 2007, we always talked about the rights and responsibilities of marriage and when we were testing those last year those weren't working anymore. People weren't feeling it because that really isn't what marriage is about for the average person. They don't get married to somebody because they want the rights and responsibilities of marriage. They marry somebody because they're madly in love with them and they want to have children or protect their children, and you know, denying this to gay families was unfair.

And so we had to shift our messaging away from rights and responsibilities to let's just do what's fair for people. So I'm going to show you a few of the ads that we did based on the messaging testing we did with. . .

I don't know how, I think I have to go back a little bit. - - . So we had two black ministers, Reverend Hickman, Dante Hickman is a black minister of a mega church in East Baltimore. He was I wouldn't say anti-marriage equality but he certainly was not a supporter of marriage until the governor really started to work with him. And he, can everyone see that?

MR. DANTE HICKMAN: As a pastor, my support for Question 6 is rooted in my belief that the government should treat everyone equally. I wouldn't want someone denying my rights based upon their religious views, so I shouldn't deny others based upon mine. It's about fairness. I support this law because it doesn't force any church to perform a same sex marriage if it's against their beliefs. And that's what this is about, protecting religious freedom and Marylanders equally under the law. Join me in voting for Question 6.

MS. EVANS: And so that was really important. When we were talking to people who were undecided about Question 6, we realized we had to be on the offense about religious freedom. It was very clear in the law as it was written as well as constitutional jurisprudence that churches are protected from not marrying people who don't coincide with their beliefs, but that we had to be on the offensive about it. We had to have these ads out before the opposing ads were out saying this is going to force your Catholic priest to have to marry gay couples in your Catholic church. So we were really adamant about raising enough money to get Reverend Hickman and Reverend Coates talking about this. What was interesting too is we thought we would have to have a different set of messengers for our white religious folks who were concerned about religious freedom and Reverends Hickman and Coates actually were as effective with white voters as they were with black voters.

Reverend Coates is a minister in Prince George's County of a mega church down there, and while most mega churches were opposed and most of the petition gathering actually happened and signature gathering happened in the back hallways of the churches of Maryland, Reverend Coates sort of went against the grain and came out in support of it as well. And this is his ad, which is very similar.

MR. DELMAN COATES: As a pastor, my support for Question 6 is rooted in my belief that the government should treat everyone equally. I would not want someone denying my rights based upon their religious views, therefore I should not deny others based upon mine. It's about fairness. This law does not force any church to perform a same sex marriage if it's against their beliefs. And that's what this is about, protecting religious freedom and protecting all Marylanders equally under the law. Join me in voting for Question 6.

MS. EVANS: And that was Reverend Coates who very much even more than Reverend Hickman became sort of the spokesperson. He worked with the NAACP, who after the week after President Obama's endorsement came out in support of marriage equality. Thankfully our proximity to D.C. and the fact that the NAACP is headquartered in Baltimore gave us great access to President Ben Jealous. We had a large radio presence in Prince George's County

And another person who resonated with voters was Julian Bond and we were able to film an ad featuring him.

MR. JULIAN BOND: My name is Julian Bond. I know a little something about fighting for what's right and just. Maryland's gay and lesbian families share the same values and they should share in the right to marry. I believe people of

faith understand this isn't about any one religious belief. It's about protecting the civil right to make a lifelong commitment to the person you love. Join me in supporting Question 6. It's the right thing to do.

MS. EVANS: The other core group that we had to work on was Republican and moderate Democrats. Many of the Republicans in Maryland are mostly what we call "country club Republicans." They're not hardcore social conservative Republicans. They're usually fiscally conservative but socially moderate in areas like Towson and Lutherville. These were folks who were, when we scratched below the surface, really looking for reasons to vote for this bill because they didn't want to vote against it. But they weren't convinced yet they should vote for it.

When we took this through the legislature we only had three Republican votes, one in the Senate and two in the House so we knew it was going to be tough convincing Republicans. One of the areas we did not have in the budget was persuading Republicans. And so what was an interesting unexpected thing was gay Republicans themselves took it upon themselves to run the campaign for winning the Republican vote. And so we had conservative scholars, officials who served in Republican Governor Robert Ehrlich's administration and straight ally Republicans doing this task.

And so we had this little core group of gay and straight ally Republicans who said, okay, we're going to figure this out. It was amazing. I did more work with Republicans in my eight months of the campaign than I've done combined in 20 years of doing this work because it really was this unexpected alliance of libertarian Republicans and LGBT advocates who said we believe we can talk to Republicans about this, and they did. It was incredible to go to these events and have all of these Republicans there supporting or at least wanting to hear why they should support marriage equality. And when you look at the results on Election Day, Walter Olson at the Cato Institute Scholar, has written about this many of the precincts with concentrations of "country club Republicans" fared about 50% on Question 6. I believe about it was really Republicans and black voters who pushed us over the top.

And you look at the precincts where we had high libertarian and independent votes where we won, you know, Frederick County, which is in western Maryland and not one of the Maryland counties you think of as progressive. It was, like, we saw Frederick County come in and I'm like, oh, my goodness, I think we may win this! But, it made sense when we looked at the precincts and what work we had been doing in those areas for years. Anne Arundel County is another Republican county we won as well.

One of the things that we needed to accomplish was "giving permission" to moderate Democrats and Republicans. They weren't opposed to marriage, but they needed someone to give them that permission, and we had to figure out who that someone was. Was it fellow Republicans? It was a bit of that. But it really was people who were just like them, particularly with our moderate Democrats who live

out in the suburbs and exurbs of Maryland who sort of were more conservative. So this was one of our ads that when you talked to folks in Maryland, this is the ad that most people said, "that was it, that's what did it for me."

MALE VOICE: The way I see it, everyone knows someone who's gay. Maybe they're across the table from you at Thanksgiving. Maybe they're playing third for the office softball team, whatever. Why wouldn't we vote to treat them equally? And that's all Question 6 is. Everyone should be free to commit to someone they love, and I'm not going to be the guy that looks his friends in the eye and tells them I voted against treating them fairly. That's why I'm voting for Question 6.

FEMALE VOICE: For Equality, for Maryland, vote for Question 6.

MS. EVANS: I think you can see with that ad a lot of white Republican and white moderate Democrats said, oh, that's me. I don't want to be the guy sitting across from Bob at Thanksgiving saying that..

There is also an aspirational part of it - I want to be a good person. I want Maryland tube better than that really I think helped with that.

At the same time Question 6 was happening, Question 4 was happening, which was an in-state tuition law in Maryland that allowed in-state tuition for undocumented students who had lived in Maryland a certain number of years, who had filed taxes. Equality Maryland, separate from the Question 6 campaign decided to do some work on Question 4. National funders, particularly the Gill Foundation were very invested in ensuring that what happened in California with Prop 8 and "the day after narrative" didn't happen in Maryland. And if you remember in Prop 8, the day after narrative there was we lost Prop 8 because Latino and black voters did not support it.

And so the Gill Foundation approached both Equality Maryland and Casa de Maryland, which is the largest immigrant serving organization in Maryland and said we want you to do C3 foundation work, educational work not lobbying or referendum work on educating your communities about these cross issues. And so we gladly accepted that challenge and Equality Maryland did a whole campaign on trying to increase support for LGBT support for this issue. It was uncharted territory. No other state group had ever taken on this issue head on. We didn't know who, I mean we didn't have enough money like the campaign to figure out, well, how do you convince the LGBT community to support this in-state tuition issue?

And so we thought hmm. Well, why don't we get some gay DREAMers and they will be the best voice. They're actually, you know, straddling both worlds. They're undocumented students and they're LGBT. So we found four incredibly, just beautiful four young LGBT dreamers and they became the face of our campaign to help increase support in the LGBT community for this issue. And then what CASA did with their grant was try to increase support in the Latino community for marriage equality. And so it was an incredible, you know, cross-

pollination of the work. Looking at results for Question 6 in neighborhoods that are predominantly Latino we certainly increased our numbers there and I think the same can be said for LGBT support of Question 4. So thankfully it was a good precedent to set for other organizations across the country that you can do this work and do it in a mindful way, get funded for it and not lose support from your base by trying to educate on other issues.

And another key point was our straight allies. As you can imagine, after almost 10 years of doing this work the LGBT community was really sort of fatigued in Maryland. They had been with this issue from 2004 and so it was really hard to get them engaged, especially because everywhere else had lost and why was Maryland going to be different? And they weren't buying our spiel. Apathy was incredibly frustrating, but the straight allies really saved the day. Organizations like Jews United for Justice which is a D.C.-based organization but has a lot of Maryland members, they rocked it. They were having phone banks and, you know, the Jewish population was incredible. And we had our first conservative Jewish rabbi come out in support of marriage equality. Of course we had Reformed rabbis, but never an orthodox or a conservative.

The governor of Maryland is a practicing Catholic and so we had a large Catholic population in Maryland to ensure support in. The governor sort of gave then permission to use their Catholicism to support equality and fairness. He was able to really explain his journey and how he believes he is a stronger and better Catholic because he supports marriage equality and fairness and the impact the law has on protecting children.

Many Catholics became very involved in the campaign. They would come with their Catholics For Marriage Equality shirts and phone bank every week.

Of course there's no campaign without the opposition, and we had opposition. It wasn't what we anticipated or expected. We waited every day for the shoe to drop. We thought, okay, this is the day they're going to announce their \$5 million ad buy and it really never happened. Money trickled in. Their leadership in Maryland was not really strong. Their messaging was sort of the same old messaging we had seen in other states that had worked, clearly in 32 other states, but perhaps needed some updating as well. I'm going to show you two ads that they did that I think could have a time date stamp of 2004, and not much has changed.

FEMALE VOICE: If gay marriage happens here, schools could teach that boys can marry boys.

MALE VOICE: After Massachusetts redefined marriage, local schools taught it to children in second grade, including the school our son attended. The courts rules parents had no right to take their children out of class or to even be informed when this instruction was going to take place.

FEMALE VOICE: If Question 6 passes, same sex marriage could be taught in local Maryland schools just as it was in Massachusetts. Don't make the same

mistake and think that gay marriage won't affect you

FEMALE VOICE: Vote against Question 6.

MS. EVANS: And then their other one.

FEMALE VOICE: Question 6 makes a lot of broken promises about gay marriage, like it won't affect anyone else, even as small business - -, charities closed and people suspended from their jobs. Who protects religious liberty? Even as Question 6 has huge loopholes impacting churches, small businesses and individuals, will gay marriage be taught to young children in public schools? Even though it was in Massachusetts and Canada. Question 6 is a lot of broken promises. Vote against Question 6.

MS. EVANS: That was a bit dramatic, wasn't it?

So we ended the campaign with what we wanted to leave in Maryland voters' minds the night before they go to the ballot boxes. We really wanted to go lofty and aspirational, like, who do we want to be as Maryland? So this is the ad we did on election eve.

MALE VOICE: Maryland, it's time, time for marriage equality. Question 6 strengthens protections for our churches and guarantees the civil right to commit to the one you love. While there are those trying to divide us, Presidents Obama and Clinton stand with us. Pastors, business leaders, newspapers, Democrats and Republicans are all coming together for Question 6 because it's about - - treating everyone equal under the law. And who could be against that?

MS. EVANS: So that was what we left voters with on election eve. Election Day, as we all know, we won. We had a little over 2.6 million votes cast on Question 6. There was, of course, voters who did not cast a vote at all on Question 6. As we expected, if we were going to win it was going to be in the low 50's. We finished with 52.4% of the vote. So that was good. The four states, it was interesting, we had a debrief with the four states and the campaign managers a few months ago here in New York, and one of the comments was that we had four totally different campaigns in Washington, Maine, Minnesota, and Maryland. Different strategies, different budgets, different staff compositions, all of that, and at the end of the day we all of finished in the 52% range. And what does that mean? Does that mean regardless of what you do you're always going to end up around the same place.

As I said, we, you know, raised \$6 million on our side. The incredible, you know, statistic we love is that we had, you know, over 11,000 unique contributors so it wasn't the same people giving the money. We really had very few large gifts. In fact the largest gift we had was Mayor Bloomberg's \$250,000 gift to the campaign, I think the average donation was \$411 and that included Mayor Bloomberg's gift averaged in there. So we really saw it was sort of like President Obama's 2008 campaign where it really was people with the \$25 and the \$15 doing that.

So I will end with talking, so you think on November 7th it's over and you've

won? And for most people it was, but for Equality Maryland actually it isn't and the work since November 7th that I've had to do working with the Attorney General's Office and Governor's Office on implementing marriage has been daunting. There's I think 607 areas of Maryland law that implicate marriage and spouses, that while some are very simple to implement for same sex couples, there's other areas that are seemingly impossible. You know, Maryland has the most coupled tax law with federal tax law in the nation and so we're sort of at the standstill with some thinking we should wait for the *Windsor* case to get decided and then, you know, it will all be fine. DOMA will be struck down and we're all good. And we're like but if it doesn't that only gives us six months before we start filing as married couples in Maryland to decouple our law.

And this isn't going to be a weekend experiment, like, decoupling, you know, a tax code that is entrenched in federal tax code is like, you know, we think we need, like, a task force for it. And so it has been very difficult to, you know, get a sense of urgency for people because of the pending *Windsor* case of, like, well, we have to have a plan B. And we can't wait. Taxes, yes, you can wait because of the tax cycle year, but in other areas we can't wait until *Windsor*?

The biggest area we're having problems with is insurance and employers not honoring same-sex spouses now. So with public entities, of course, we have not only the court case and the Attorney General opinion so we're able to get problems satisfied quite easily and Lambda has been helping. But for private companies, it isn't as easy. There is probably going to be regulatory intervention and/or litigation to ensure private companies who aren't self-insured to treat all spouses the same.

We have smaller companies who aren't self-insured that the Insurance Commissioner of Maryland is really going to have to start being quite tough with them in requiring, you know, compliance with the law.

So even though we have marriage licenses being issued and we see the great pictures and stuff, there is still always this period after, especially with the presence of a federal DOMA where you have to figure out what marriage equality looks like legally in your state.

Any questions? Praveen? Praveen and I used to work together at the Human Rights Campaign so we're so excited to see each other. We have to come to New York to see each other. That's bad.

MR. FERNANDES: - - .

MS. EVANS: Lewis.

MR. FERNANDES: - - .

MS. EVANS: Right.

MR. FERNANDES: - - .

MS. EVANS: Right, thank you for pointing that out. No, that's absolutely yep, true.

MR. FERNANDES: - - .

MS. EVANS: They were cool. They were cool before it was, you know, cool to be, you know, with us.

MR. FERNANDES:- - .

MS. EVANS: Yes.

MR. FERNANDES:- - .

MS. EVANS: Right.

MR. FERNANDES:- - .

MS. EVANS: Well, I think what's happening is that a lot of our African American supporters are embracing that, leaders are embracing that language again because that's really how they frame it in their mind. Like, I think if you were to sit with the President, wouldn't we all like that, like, in his journey it was an obvious step in the capital C, capital R Civil Rights movement of the United States. And for a lot of folks, you know, it was a journey. Not for Julian Bond and John Lewis, right? They were just, like, duh, like, you know, this is absolutely the next step in civil rights for this country. And so I think because, you know, for, and it's really people sharing their stories, right? Like, Obama's endorsement was so significant not because, it wasn't significant because he endorsed marriage equality, but what was significant about it is that he shared how he got there because, you know, he didn't, he wasn't Julian Bond and he wasn't John Lewis, who literally they, there was no getting there. They were always there.

And for most people, although we would want them to be that way they aren't. The average American was and is not, you know, just woo-hoo and so to hear the President talk about being around the dinner table with his daughters and getting cajoled by them, you know, but dad, you know, like, you're not cool and stuff. Like, really? Like, that helped people, like, they're like yeah. That's, you know, because they felt pressure like they literally just should wake up one morning and be supportive or otherwise they're a bigot and that's not how you approach this. Like, you have to meet people where they're at and, you know, bring them as far as you can. But meeting them where they're at is often at those places, you know, and it's hard because you know much of this work is meeting with people who are opposed to you but that you know have an open heart and an open mind and figuring out how you get them to you.

Like there are people, trust me, there are people you can give up on, like, don't, you know, I know you always have that one volunteer who's, like, oh, you know, I want to go to so-and-so and just, you know? And I'm, like, you know what? You can spend three hours with so-and-so and they're not going to change their mind. Why don't you go spend, you know, three hours with this group of moveable voters? But it's recognizing those people and realizing, you know, it is our responsibility to move them along as long as they have an open heart and an open mind. All right, well you all have been, if you've been here since 10:00 a.m. I'm very impressed, so thank you.