Resolution to support Marriage Equality legislation in Minnesota through HF 1054 and SF 925

Whereas, the graduate students of the University of Minnesota are taught to be critical thinkers, tolerant of diversity, and informed citizens; and

Whereas, current law sends the message that Minnesota is hostile to gay and lesbian citizens; and

Whereas, while there is significant disagreement among religious groups over the meaning of marriage, we are a secular nation, and as a nation founded on separation of church and state, no single religious belief should be used in crafting our laws; and

Whereas, the Supreme Court of the United States has ruled no less than fourteen times that marriage is a fundamental right; and

Whereas, Minnesota made history in 2012 by becoming the first state in the nation to reject a constitutional amendment that would have forever banned Marriage Equality; and

Whereas, nine other states, the District of Columbia, and many nations world-wide have legalized Marriage Equality, Minnesota is at a competitive disadvantage by not offering same-sex couples the same rights and privileges associated with marriage; and

Whereas, the lack of Marriage Equality legislation in our state causes undue harm and burden to same-sex families in our state through the denial of over 1,500 federal and state rights that are only available to opposite-sex couples. These include filing joint tax returns, property inheritance, hospital visitation rights, joint adoption, and many other government benefits, such as: military and veteran’s benefits, Social Security, Medicare, and disability; and

Therefore, be it resolved that we, the Council of Graduate Students, support the legislative efforts of Senator Scott Dibble and Representative Karen Clark to pass Marriage Equality legislation in Minnesota in 2013 through HF 1054 and SF 925. We resolve, without hesitation, that these bills will benefit Minnesota by making our state a more attractive place to live, eliminate the second-class citizen status created by current law, and reaffirm the validity of the love expressed by all of our citizens.