



## Colorado Gay Adoption Bill On Way To Ritter

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Apr 13, 2007 6:45 am US/Mountain

(AP) DENVER Colorado is poised to join 10 other states which allow gay couples to adopt children together.

Gov. Bill Ritter plans to sign a bill which would allow the practice, spokesman Evan Dreyer said Thursday. The Senate gave final approval to the measure (House Bill 1330) earlier in the day, sending the bill to his desk.

"He intends to sign the bill," Dreyer said.



Current state law allows gay individuals to adopt but not same-sex partners. Married couples are already allowed to adopt each other's children as stepparents.

The proposal simulates the stepparent adoption process for same-sex partners and other unmarried couples.

Republicans charged the measure was aimed at promoting a "homosexual agenda" and paving the way toward civil unions for gay couples. They say Colorado voters rejected gay adoption last fall when they voted against Referendum I, which would have allowed couples who registered as domestic partners to adopt children.

Sen. Jennifer Veiga, D-Denver, said gay couples are already raising children together and the state should protect those children by giving them two legal parents.

"They exist in my district and they exist in every one of your districts," she said.

The Colorado Catholic Conference and the Colorado Family Institute, one of 35 public policy groups with links to Focus on the Family, oppose the measure and hope to convince Ritter to veto it.

Jim Pfaff, president of the Colorado Family Institute, said Colorado should be encouraging married couples to adopt because that's the best environment for children to be raised in.

"This bill doesn't take into account that fact of social science. Instead it tries to meet the needs of a thin minority of people to meet their agenda," Pfaff said.

**Ten states and the District of Columbia allow second-parent adoptions either because of laws or statewide appellate court rulings, according to the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.**

It's also allowed by trial courts in some jurisdictions in 15 other states. Colorado is one of four states where appellate courts have ruled that second-parent adoption isn't allowed under current law.