# Massachusetts House Votes in Favour of Parentage Rights Expansion Bill



**Massachusetts House Approves Bill to Expand Parentage Rights**

The Massachusetts House of Representatives unanimously passed a bill aimed at updating state laws to better reflect modern family structures and support LGBTQ families and those using alternative reproduction methods like in vitro fertilization. The legislation, promoted by civil rights and LGBTQ activists, seeks to simplify the legal processes for establishing parentage through various means such as birth, adoption, surrogacy, and marriage.

Rep. Sarah Peake, a Provincetown Democrat married to a woman, emphasized the outdated nature of existing laws. "These laws can make it difficult for LGBTQ families to establish legal parenthood," Peake said.

The proposed legislation would eliminate the need for one parent in a same-sex couple to formally adopt their child to attain equal parental status. House Speaker Ron Mariano tied the bill's progression to the celebration of Pride Month, underscoring its relevance to current societal changes.

Opposition came from the Massachusetts Family Institute, which argued that the bill prioritizes adult desires over children's needs and could commodify children through surrogacy and donor arrangements. Despite this, the bill passed with a 156-0 vote after emotional speeches from both sides of the aisle.

Republican Rep. Hannah Kane of Shrewsbury voiced support, highlighting her wish for her lesbian daughter to enjoy the same parental rights she and her husband experienced. The bill's passage reflects a continued commitment to recognizing diverse family structures in Massachusetts.

The bill's approval comes nearly 20 years after Massachusetts became the first state to legalize same-sex marriage, marking a significant legislative shift in support of parental rights for all families.