



## National Association of Social Workers

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### **Speech by Rick Harris, Executive Director at the Marriage Equality Rally in the State House Rotunda: February 14, 2006.**

*For the third year in a row, the National Association of Social Workers - Rhode Island Chapter formerly endorses marriage equality legislation. We pledge to use every available resource to lobby and promote the passage of House Bill #6925 and Senate Bill # 2149.*

*No community is a healthy community until all its members are treated with dignity, fairness and equality. Rhode Island was founded on these very principles. As a State, we have not implemented these ideals speedily and without resistance, however, through the years Rhode Island has made changes toward a fair and equitable community because citizens such as you, have displayed the tenacity and strength to make it happen. It is time to hold our lawmakers accountable to the founding principles of our State. Its time to come closer to creating that community of caring and respect for all. Its time to pass H - 6925 and S- 2149.*

*We, as an organization, as individual members, will be there with you lobbying, testifying and educating every step of the way.*

*Rhode Island cannot endure continued discrimination for long. Rhode Island cannot continue to be in denial of this very basic human and civil right. Each and everyone one of you here today, and many more who are not... are the teachers... the catalyst and ...the instrument to right this injustice.*

*Marriage Equality Now! Believe!*

*Thank you.*