

Same-sex benefits advance in Colorado

by UPI

DENVER - Two years after Colorado voters banned same-sex marriage, the state Senate has given preliminary approval to a bill extending some benefits to gay partners.

The bill passed Monday after heated debate, the Rocky Mountain News reported. The measure, which would allow the gay partners of state employees to get health benefits, is expected to have a final vote this week.

Some opponents argued the Senate should not go against the will of the voters, who approved a constitutional amendment that defines marriage as between a man and a woman. Others said this is not the right time to add new recipients of state benefits.

Sen. Jennifer Veiga, a Denver Democrat and the first open gay in the Colorado Legislature, said the bill is not about marriage.

Sen. Scott Renfroe, a Greeley Republican, called homosexuality "an offense against God" and equated it with murder.

"When we create laws that go against biblically what we are supposed to

stand for, we are allowing to go forward a sin," Renfroe said. "We are taking sins and making them to be legally OK. That is wrong."

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