



ST. PAUL, Minn. (AP) In passionate back-and-forth testimony, the debate over same-sex marriage is playing out in a Minnesota Legislature moving toward the first votes on a bill to legalize it.

Supporters and opponents went one-by-one Tuesday before the House Civil Law Committee, which planned to act on the legislation later in the day. A Senate committee also planned a vote. If the bills pass, they'll slip below the radar for weeks as the budget takes center stage. A final vote on the marriage bills could be months away.

The House panel heard from pastors, doctors, parents, children and couples on both sides of the issue.

Last fall, Minnesota voters rejected a constitutional amendment that would have permanently barred gay marriage. Almost immediately the push to allow same-sex weddings began.