WHEREAS the Governor and Legislature of the state of Maryland on March 1, 2012, enacted the Civil Marriage Protection Act, extending legal protection for civil marriage to all couples in the state of Maryland; and

WHEREAS this synod has both congregations and individual members of the synod who live and/or worship in Maryland; and

WHEREAS the ELCA’s Social Statement Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust states that “While Lutherans hold various convictions regarding lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, this church is united on many critical issues” (p. 19). This church:

1) “supports legislation and policies to protect civil rights and to prohibit discrimination in housing, employment, and public services.” (p. 19)

2) “has called upon congregations and members of this church to welcome, care for, and support same-gender couples and their families and to advocate for their legal protection.” (p. 19)

3) “will advocate for public policies that support and protect families.” (p. 24)

4) recognizes that some faithful Lutherans “conclude that marriage is also the appropriate term to use in describing similar benefits, protection, and support for same-gender couples entering into lifelong, monogamous relationships” and that “they believe that such accountable relationships provide the necessary foundation that supports trust and familial and community thriving;” (p. 18), therefore be it:

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Washington DC Synod, meeting in Assembly, calls upon congregations and members of this synod to welcome, care for,
RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Washington DC Synod, meeting in Assembly, commends Governor O’Malley and the Maryland Legislature for extending the protections of marriage to all persons and for protecting freedom of religion for all faith communities and religious organizations; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Washington DC Synod, meeting in Assembly, supports the law as enacted and is opposed to again precluding one group of committed couples and their families from having the legal support and protections afforded to all others; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Washington DC Synod, meeting in Assembly, urges the bishop, clergy, and other synod leaders to speak publicly in defense of the Maryland Civil Marriage Protection Act; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Washington DC Synod, meeting in Assembly, urges the synod bishop (or designee) to make the synod’s position on the Maryland Civil Marriage Protection Act known throughout the synod and to the public at large.