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Cantor Says House Will Defend Marriage Act

By **CARL HULSE**

With Republicans upset at the Obama administration's abandonment of the Defense of Marriage Act, Representative **Eric Cantor**, the Virginia Republican and majority leader, said on Monday that the House would take action by the end of the week to make certain the law is defended against legal challenges.

Mr. Cantor said he agreed with Speaker **John A. Boehner** that the House should step in and suggested that most members of the House find it disappointing that the White House has decided unilaterally not to defend a duly passed law.

Mr. Boehner first indicated his plans to intervene on behalf of the law that bans federal recognition of gay marriages in an interview over the weekend with the Christian Broadcasting Network.

"I really am disappointed in the president in his actions," Mr. Boehner told the network. "But if the president won't defend DOMA, then you'll see the House of Representatives defend our actions in passing a bill that frankly passed overwhelmingly."

"We've been researching all the options available to us," Mr. Boehner said.

Among those options is House appointment of a special counsel to defend the constitutionality of the law that the administration has decided is discriminatory.

The decision to take on the marriage law could be politically sensitive for the new Republican House majority. Some of their allies have urged Republicans to remain focused on the fiscal issues that helped them win their majority last November and stay out of the fights over social issues that can drive off independent voters.

But Mr. Boehner has so far shown that while he is focusing on spending and the economy, he is not afraid to take on social policy such as abortion and now gay marriage.

"While these are two big issues that we are driving over the next two years," Mr. Boehner said about spending and employment in a recent interview, "it doesn't mean there aren't other things that are important."

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