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Same-sex marriage debate on three fronts Wednesday

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PROVIDENCE, R.I. - The State House debate over same-sex marriage will play out in three forums on Wednesday: a press conference, a rally and then a House Judiciary Committee hearing.

It will begin with the 2:45 p.m. press conference called by the national group - known as the National Organization for Marriage - that is leading and financing the opposition campaign in Rhode Island.

Speakers will include Maggie Gallagher, the chairwoman of the National Organization for Marriage, Christopher Plante, the executive director of the local NOM chapter, Austin Nimocks, who is identified as the "Senior Counsel Alliance Defense Fund," Dr. Jennifer Roback Morse, president and founder of the Ruth Institute, which is described as a project of NOM, state Sen. Harold Metts and state Rep. Raymond Hull.

At the press conference, these opponents of same-sex marriage pledge a vigorous campaign to "defeat efforts by House Leadership and Governor Chafee to impose same-sex marriage on Rhode Island with no vote of the people," according to a statement issued by the national group.

Advocates of same sex marriage are planning their own rally at 4 p.m., at the same time state lawmakers are arriving for the House and Senate sessions. Their theme: "Honoring and Protecting ALL Rhode Island Families."

After the House adjourns for the day, the House Judiciary Committee hearing will begin on two bills. [One](#) would legalize gay nuptials. The [other](#), backed by the opponents, seeks a referendum on amending the state Constitution to specifically limit marriage to a man and a woman.

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