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SECOND OPINION

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MARCH 1, 2011

Del. Carter's gay marriage tantrum

It is difficult to know what to say about Del. Jill Carter's decision to walk out on a committee vote for the Civil Marriage Protection Act, otherwise known as Maryland's gay marriage bill. The primary difficulty is that saying anything at all simply gives Ms. Carter more attention, and that is just what she evidently craves. To condemn her action runs the perverse risk of encouraging her bad behavior.

But what she did brings disrepute not just on herself but on the entire effort to enact this legislation.

Ms. Carter left the House Judiciary Committee's voting session today and demanded that legislative leaders fast-track two other causes, an effort to restore education funding and a divorce-custody bill she is sponsoring, before she would return to cast what would be the decisive vote in bringing the marriage bill to the House floor. That self-aggrandizing action shows a deluded sense of her importance that will do her no favors in her efforts to support other causes or in her future campaigns for office.

But more damagingly, it reduces legislation about fundamental human rights -- legislation she co-sponsored -- to petty horse trading. What had been ennobling about the debate over this issue so far had been the sincerity of arguments advanced on both sides, but Ms. Carter has chosen to put political expediency ahead of the interests of thousands of Marylanders and her own avowed beliefs, and she is acting as if that is a virtue. She cheapens the honest and difficult decisions her fellow legislators have made.

There is no question that legislative leaders should not and will not accede to her demands. They cannot negotiate with a hostage-taker. Sadly, that could, indeed, give her the power to scuttle the bill. But she should think very carefully before doing that. It may give her a fleeting moment of power, but it will do nothing to advance the goals she articulated today and will instead relegate her forever to political infamy.

Posted by [Andy Green](#) at 5:25 PM | [Permalink](#) | [Comments \(2\)](#)

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Contributors

Mike Cross-Barnet, who spends most of his time running *The Baltimore Sun's* Commentary page, has been known to opine on whatever strikes his fancy. International politics, immigration, religion, culture and social trends are just a handful of the topics you may find scrutinized in this space.

Andy Green has taken the "know a little bit about everything" approach in his time at *The Sun*. He was the city/state editor before coming to the editorial board, and prior to that he covered the State House and Baltimore County government. His reporting has taken him to every county in Maryland as he's tracked issues ranging from slot machine gambling to electric rates. As an editor, he oversaw coverage of crime, education, the environment, health, science and more.

Peter Jensen, former State House reporter and features writer, takes the lead on state government, transportation issues and the environment; he is the board's resident funny man and capital schmooze.

Glenn McNatt, who returned to editorial writing after serving as the newspaper's art critic, keeps an eye on the arts, culture, politics and the law for the editorial board.

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Comments

I know what I would do if I were the Speaker. NO bill of hers would ever see the light of day . Unfortunately, I have had past dealings with her on other subjects. She is all about herself and only herself. It's a shame her constituents don't know what she is truly about.

Posted by: Prophet | **March 1, 2011 6:02 PM**

Just another low-life narcissistic Balto. politician!!!

Posted by: MikeB | **March 1, 2011 6:08 PM**

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