The purpose of this group is to deny human rights to members of our community. The Supreme court has already determined that the position of this group is illegal. It would be an embarrassment for your department to issue charity status to this illegal group. Groups like preserve marriage need to understand that their position is illegal and will not be supported in Bermuda.

thank you,
Good Evening,

I would like to express my concern about Preserve Marriage becoming a charity. Hate groups should not be allowed to be considered for charity status. They encourage people to be hostile to LGBT people. This is directly contrast what any charity should be. Thank you for listening to my concerns.

Regards,
From: [redacted]
To: Charity Info <charityinfo@gov.bm>
Cc:
Date: Mon, 28 Mar 2016 21:54:19 +0000
Subject: Preserve Marriage charity
Please do not consider giving Preserve Marriage charity status. They are such a hateful group who should NOT be a charity.
Forwarded message

From: ___________________
To: Charity Info <charityinfo@gov.bm>
Cc:
Date: Mon, 28 Mar 2016 21:12:38 +0000
Subject: Preserve Marriage bid to be a charity

Hello,
I absolutely do NOT support this 'organization' becoming a charity.

If they were to consider banning divorce, which would apply to heterosexual and homosexual couples, then perhaps I could entertain the idea.

But as it stands, I oppose giving this group charity status.

Sincerely,
I request that you please deny the application of Preserve Marriage charity status.
Preserve marriage is a 'political' action group not a helping agency. Their only mandate is to deny a minority group the same privileges and responsibilities afforded people solely 'like themselves'. Their arguments against same sex marriage are based on religious preference or biased studies. The only people a charity like this would be 'helping' is exactly no one as the people opposed to same sex marriage are not going to be impacted in any way by its introduction.

I do not understand how a group attempting to impose its personal beliefs and philosophies on others, through the law no less, can even begin to be considered a charity. Charities give real world aid to others, not the means to inflict separation and inferior status on a minority group. Charities attempt to bring unity to communities, inclusion of the least amongst us. This group is doing the complete opposite of that.

Giving this group charitable status would be legitimizing the right to discriminate against minorities. Please do not give send that message.

With hope,

Sent from my iPad
I completely disagree that this group should qualify as a charity. It is very obvious that they are a political action group and I believe that approving their application would result in a dangerous precedent.

Regards,
The person involved in Preserve Marriage's application for charity status attempted to raise funds illegally on the preservemarriage website. This same person is also a Director of the Center on Philanthropy. This same person was a Director Sandys 360, a failed charity organization with improper accounting, and possibly no accounts. There was also the questionable matter of Government funds supporting Sandys 360 being paid in twice. What happened to the money?

This person is Dr. Melvyn Bassett.

http://www.mobile.royalgazette.com/article/20151210/NEWS/151219970

http://www.royalgazette.com/article/20151210/NEWS/151219970

http://www.royalgazette.com/article/20131106/NEWS/131109851

The Royal Gazette names Melvyn Bassett as Chairman of Preserve Marriage

http://www.royalgazette.com/article/20160222/NEWS/160229940

If you break the rules in trying to raise funds, and you have operated a failed charity, how can a new application involving the same person stand? To add insult to injury this person sits as a Director at the Center on Philanthropy.

To form a charity to raise funds that would then discriminate against the LGBT community and their Human Right to MarriageEquality via a public campaign cannot stand.
In reference to the application for Preserve Marriage to become a charity.
I implore you to consider not allowing them to become a charity as they are not open to equal rights for the lesbian/gay community which goes against their human rights.
I appreciate your attention to this matter,
Greetings Good People,

I am writing in reference to Preserve Marriage's application for charity status. As a lesbian Bermudian I feel bullied by the PreserveMarriage group - there is nothing charitable about them! Their sole purpose is to force our Government to deny equal marriage rights to gay and lesbian persons in Bermuda. Their extensive advertising campaign demonstrates that they have deep pockets; let them continue without obtaining charity status - surely, you don't want to cosign on their fear mongering and bigotry!

In the spirit of a Bermuda that affirms all of its citizens,
I write this e-mail in order to express my reservations in granting “Preserve Marriage” Charitable status in Bermuda. PreserveMarriage is a political pressure group in direct opposition to a significant minority people living in Bermuda. As such I believe it would be inappropriate to grant charitable status to this organization.
I remain,
Yours truly
To Whom it May Concern,

I understand that the "Preserve Marriage" group is planning to register as a charity and I would like to register the fact that I object to an exclusionary and bigoted group gaining charitable status in Bermuda.

With best regards,
I am writing to object to Preserve Marriage gaining charitable status from the government. This group is pushing a personal religious view of marriage that is not relevant to me and many of my friends and family members. Please respect the government’s responsibility to support all of its citizens by refusing to recognize a group which advances prejudice. History will remember this decision.
--- Forwarded message ---
From: [redacted]
To: Charity Info <charityinfo@gov.bm>
Cc: 
Date: Mon, 21 Mar 2016 02:41:52 +0000
Subject: Preserve Marriage
To whom it may concern,

I object to Preserve Marriage gaining charitable status because they are trying to get status to lobby for a political change and not for any purpose that truly benefits the community.

Regards,

Sent from my iPhone
Greetings
All is well?
I object to Preserve Marriage gaining charitable status.
May you enjoy the rest of your day.
Take Care
I vote against "Preserve Marriage"

Love is a human right and the right of adults to enter into consensual marriage is respected in international human rights standards.

Let's make some mindful progress and catch up with other countries around the world.

Sincerely,
I am writing to express my objection of Preserve Marriage (PM) gaining charity status. PM is a political action group that has lobbied the government to make changes in our law and this is their only aim, pressuring parliament. They do not do charity work and the money they receive will not benefit anyone but their own organization. I would suggest scrutinizing this organization fully before making your decision.

Regards,
Hi,

It is my understanding that this group who have identified themselves as Preserve Marriage is applying for registered charity status in Bermuda.

The aim of their charitable purpose(s) is to diminish the rights of people based on sexual orientation. Rights that are protected by Bermuda's Human Rights Act. Approval of charities that violate Bermuda's human rights I believe sends the wrong message to Bermuda's residents.

Please consider denying Preserve Marriage the approval that they seek.

Regards,
Good Day,

It has recently come to my attention that the Religious Group "Preserve Marriage Bermuda" wish to register as a charity.

My small understanding of this group's purpose is to prevent same-sex marriage, which should be and eventually will become a basic human right. This group will be able to use this status to garner funds from the community to use for a political agenda. Unacceptable.
Forwarded message

From: [Redacted]
To: Charity Info <charityinfo@gov.bm>
Cc:
Date: Fri, 18 Mar 2016 17:09:55 +0000
Subject: Opposition to Registration

Good day,

As a Bermudian man who identifies as gay, I am writing to you to oppose the registration of Preserve Marriage as a charity in Bermuda.

While I support an individual and group's right to express an opinion, a charity should have a goal of bettering society in a positive way. Becoming a charity to simply advocate politically and publicly to deny, what other common law jurisdictions grant as a right to a class of citizens is unconscionable. It's a group whose message divides the community based on an aspect of an individual's identity which the individual has no control over.

Charities play a very important role in gathering the community together to ensure that a positive outcome is reached for whichever cause said charity is advocating for. A message of inclusion and unity should be part of their work. An organization advocating for legally sanctioned discrimination should not be allowed to operate as a charity.

Thank you for your time.

Kind regards,
I recently have heard that Preserve Marriage is requesting to become a registered charity in Bermuda. I am deeply concerned with allowing this group to become a registered charity.

The definition of charity is "the voluntary giving of help, typically in the form of money to those in need", Preserve Marriage is not a "need" and is a pressure group that does not promote positive attitudes within our community. They are raising funds for political gain.

It is with this being said that I completely object to allowing this group to become a charity in Bermuda.

I appreciate your understanding.

Sincerely,
I'm emailing in to say that I am against the group Preserve Marriage becoming a charity. They are a church based group and should not be giving the right to become a Charity. They can pool some of their Sunday offering from each church to pay for their posters and flyers.

Kind Regards

Sent from my iPhone
I understand Preserve Marriage has filed an application to become a charity and am writing to register my personal objection. This group is a collective with the sole purpose of political lobbying to oppress the LGBTQ community of Bermuda.

Their website states their purpose as:
"We believe that marriage should remain as a special union ordained by God between a man and a woman because of its impact on society.
1. This union celebrates the necessary natural differences between a male and a female to procreate, fosters moral integrity, strengthens the family unit and therefore our society. A husband and wife who become mothers and fathers bring separate, distinct and irreplaceable parenting dynamics to the life of a child.

2. A few should not decide for the many. In a democratic society the people should decide before any major change takes place because redefining marriage will reorder society.

The voting population of Bermuda should have the right and dignity to have their voice heard because at the end of the day, the decisions made will impact them the most."

While this group may be advancing their religious beliefs, they are doing so at the expense of the dignity and human rights of others. Their sole purpose seems to be political lobbying, not spiritual work and in my mind does not fit into the criteria of "religious harmony" but instead tramples on principles of human rights. This group does not serve a public benefit.

Thank you for considering my concerns.

Sincerely,
--- Forwarded message ---

From: [Redacted]
To: Charity Info <charityinfo@gov.bm>
Cc:
Date: Fri, 8 Apr 2016 14:05:22 +0000
Subject: FW: Objection to "Preserve Marriage's" application for charitable status

Good Morning
I understand that Preserve Marriage has applied to become a registered charity. I completely oppose this application and would request that you do not approve charity status to an organisation that does nothing for Bermuda’s reputation worldwide. Bermuda was one of the last countries to decriminalize homosexuality. Let us not be further ridiculed by allowing a homophobic organisation to set up as a recognised charity in Bermuda!
I have recently lost my husband after [Redacted] years of marriage. The legalities that I had to go through with respect to my husband’s estate were already onerous enough. I would hate to think what would have happened if my life partner had been of the same sex, and my rights as a spouse were not recognised. Same sex marriage is a matter of human rights. The sooner Bermuda moves forward to recognise this, the better our reputation will be worldwide. Please do not give credence to this group of misinformed individuals.
Sincerely,

[Redacted]

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I am writing to voice my opinion about the Preserve Marriage’s application to become a registered charity. I completely object to this, along with many other people in Bermuda.

Charitable status should not be given to a group that spouts hate and homophobic statements. It certainly has no benefit to the Bermuda public and will further fuel a backwards way of thinking. We need to bring Bermuda forward with our Human Rights policies – not move her backwards.

Please don’t approve their status and contribute to inequality. Bermuda is better than that.

Kind regards,
From: [redacted]
To: Charity Info <charityinfo@gov.bm>
Cc:
Date: Thu, 7 Apr 2016 15:11:10 +0000
Subject: Preserve Marriage should NOT be a charity

How can we let such bigotry and inequality exist? I am vehemently opposed to Preserve Marriage becoming a charity.

Sincerely,

[redacted]
I would like to formally oppose to Preserve Marriage's bid for charitable status... I see absolutely no benefit to the public of Bermuda from them receiving this.

According to the dictionary, by definition to be 'charitable' - you must judge other's leniently or favorably - synonyms include: generous, liberal, tolerant, broad-minded, considerate, sympathetic, forgiving, and kind - to name a few. For charitable works - synonyms include being philanthropic, humanitarian, altruistic and public-spirited. I fail to see how this hate group can be considered any of the above. They exemplify the opposite of all that it means to be charitable.

Please do not grant them charitable status - they are an antiquated group who shouldn't receive any benefits that are attached with becoming a charity.

Regards,
Forwarded message

From: [Redacted]
To: Charity Info <charityinfo@gov.bm>
Cc:
Date: Thu, 7 Apr 2016 13:27:47 +0000
Subject: Do not grant "Preserve Marriage" charitable status

No group - no matter how cleverly named - that seeks to deny the human rights of other people is acting in a charitable way.

Please do not grant “Preserve Marriage” charitable status.

[Redacted]
Forwarded message

From: [redacted]
To: Charity Info <charityinfo@gov.bm>
Cc:
Date: Thu, 7 Apr 2016 12:40:08 +0000
Subject: Objection to Preserve Marriage being granted charitable status

Good morning,
I'm a Bermudian writing to lodge my objections to Preserve Marriage's application for charitable status. There is no room for bigotry in modern Bermuda. Besides being morally wrong and an affront to human rights, the Government would be kowtowing to zealots parroting dangerous, inaccurate hate speech. Surely that's not the way to draw tourists to our island in precarious economic times? Do we need more repeats of the Rosie cruise debacle?

Best,

[redacted]
I am writing to personally express my objection to "Preserve Marriage" obtaining charitable status under Bermuda law.

Preserve Marriage are a political pressure group and do not do any actual work towards preserving marriages of individuals. Their real aim seems to be a smear campaign focused on de-legitimizing the relationships of consenting same sex couples.

Please do not grant charity status to this group.

Regards,
Dear Members of the Charities Commission,

Given a recent Royal Gazette article which highlighted that Preserve Marriage Bermuda Limited were asked to take down their online donation form, it is clear that the group is interested in soliciting funds from the public. In light of this, it only seems logical that their next step would be to seek registration for charitable status. It is based on the assumption that an application will be made to you sometime in the future that I am contacting you to provide my feedback. While I am confident that many of the points I identify herein would be considered by you in any event, as not only a concerned member of the public, but also a former Commissioner, I feel compelled to address this and would be most grateful if you could give it your consideration.

1. Political Objects

Preserve Marriage have operated a very political campaign over the past several months; hosting public demonstrations, public advertising, bringing in overseas speakers and of course an online presence via website and social media. They highlight three very specific objectives, found here: [http://www.preservemarriage.bm/images/Preserve%20Marriage%20Snap-shot.pdf](http://www.preservemarriage.bm/images/Preserve%20Marriage%20Snap-shot.pdf)

and for ease of reference are:

1. To inform the public about the truth of civil unions
2. To ensure legislation related to marriage in Bermuda is fortified
3. To ensure that a few do not decide for the many

As the statutory guidance reflects on what the courts consider 'political purpose', the main 'political purpose' comes up:

A - security or opposing any change in the law, whether in Bermuda or overseas

All three of the objectives that Preserve Marriage have publicly advertised and endorsed, are clearly political in nature. It seems that their objects and the initiatives that have been implemented over their many months of campaigning have been specifically designed to oppose the Government’s consideration of same sex marriage and/or civil unions.

In fact, even the running of a petition on the Preserve Marriage website is designed to influence the government to not consider changing the laws as they relate to marriage equality.

2. Public Benefit

If Preserve Marriage submit an application for charitable status, then serious consideration should be given as to whether there is any clear tangible or intangible benefits to the public, based on their existing objectives. It is difficult to imagine what activities Preserve Marriage could undertake to show true public benefit based on their activity to date. In addition, it is difficult to see how any of the identified objectives
of the group have any real basis in the long term. This further highlights that Preserve Marriage represents more a political organization than a charity who can have any real benefit to provide the public.

On a related note, it is difficult to see how a group that defines itself by its opposition to the rights of a protected group under the Human Rights Act 1981 as having a public benefit. While Preserve Marriage's website does contemplate the idea that people of all sexualities should be respected, their activities and indeed their objectives do not foster or generate respect for the LGBTQ community. On the contrary, some would argue that Preserve Marriage incite discord within the community. The messaging, whether through content or medium, denies any semblance of acceptance or inclusiveness of the LGBTQ community by the public. As an example (from the PDF above, which was printed and inserted in every RG newspaper a number of weeks ago), Preserve Marriage cites a number of news articles/stories as the 'Consequences to Redefining Marriage' - a lot of which in fact are beneficial and supportive of the LGBTQ community and are used by Preserve Marriage as 'scare tactics' to bolster support for its public opposition to any change in Bermuda law to recognise same-sex marriages. Irrespective of their stance on marriage equality, Preserve Marriage is doing great harm to the ability of LGBTQ Bermudians and residents, to be respected and protected in Bermuda, something which they are to be afforded by the Human Rights Act 1981.

3 - Religion

I have some concerns if Preserve Marriage apply for charitable status under the guise of 'advancement of religion'. PreserveMarriage has publicly stated that it represents those that are religious and those that are not and the implications of the objectives that they wish to implement affect people whether they are religious, non-religious, Christian, non-Christian etc. It is difficult to see how a purpose could be the advancement of religion if they truly represent those who are religious and those who are not. Indeed, the advancement of religion if contemplated in this way, cannot be considered a benefit to the public as the very specific objectives of Preserve Marriage do not affect their membership at all, or create a public benefit but only go to influence laws relating to none of their membership. Even if advancement of religion was considered in this regard, it assumes all Christian denominations believe the same on this topic, when there are denominations on the island and Christian ministers and pastors that believe in marriage equality and do not consider homosexuality a sin. The ability of Preserve Marriage to undertake charitable work under the guise of religion when it directly undermines the faith and religion of others, could also be considered harmful or detrimental.

Overall, I ask the Commissioners to consider any such application which may be received from Preserve Marriage very carefully as I trust you will. To allow what is effectively a political action group to obtain charitable status and solicit funds from the public could set an alarming precedent and in this instance specifically, could allow a group to act as a 'charity' seeking to marginalize a protected class under the Human Rights Act. Consider this, would we ever allow a group of men calling for the preservation of a woman's role in the home to obtain charitable status?

I appreciate your time and consideration of these points.

Kind regards,
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