National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.
Office of the President Dr. Julius R. Scruggs

A Statement on the Same-sex Marriage Issue, Voting and Christian Responsibility

June 21, 2012

On May 9, 2012, our President, Barack Obama, gave his personal opinion on same-sex marriage. His position is that same-sex partners should have the right to marry as do heterosexual couples and have access to the same benefits.

The National Baptist Convention, USA, Incorporated does not dictate to its constituent churches what position to take on issues because we believe in the autonomy of the local church. However, the National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc. affirms that marriage is a sacred biblical covenant between a man and a woman.

While many disagree and others agree with President Obama on the issue of same-sex marriage, let it be crystal clear that we are not a one-issue oriented convention.

Indeed, we have great appreciation for our President and for many of the stands that he has taken. For example, we appreciate his positions on health care reform, public education, student college loans, ending of the war in Iraq, leading in turning around the U. S. automobile industry, expanding Pell Grant spending, expanding health care for children, providing payment to wronged minority farmers, framing a foreign policy that has improved America's image in the global community and advocating freedom and justice for all people, regardless of race, creed, color, ethnic background or gender.

Our convention further encourages each of us to pray for our President as he seeks to lead our nation and impact the global community for good.

I trust and pray that we will not allow our President's position on marriage equality to distract or deter us from our Christian obligation and responsibility to vote in this Fall's elections. Remember that many of our people have prayed, suffered, bled and died for us to have the right to vote. **Please**, let's vote.

Julius R. Scruggs

Julius R. Scruggs, President
National Baptist Convention, USA, Inc.