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From the Los Angeles Times

## Connecticut high court rules same-sex couples can marry

From the Associated Press  
12:22 PM EDT, October 10, 2008

HARTFORD, Conn. - Connecticut's Supreme Court ruled today that same-sex couples have the right to marry, making the state the third behind Massachusetts and California to legalize such unions.

The divided court ruled 4-3 that gay and lesbian couples cannot be denied the freedom to marry under the state constitution, and Connecticut's civil unions law does not provide those couples with the same rights as heterosexual couples.

"I can't believe it. We're thrilled, we're absolutely overjoyed. We're finally going to be able, after 33 years, to get married," said Janet Peck of Colchester, who was a plaintiff with her partner, Carole Conklin.

"Interpreting our state constitutional provisions in accordance with firmly established equal protection principles leads inevitably to the conclusion that gay persons are entitled to marry the otherwise qualified same sex partner of their choice," Justice Richard N. Palmer wrote in the majority opinion that overturned a lower court finding.

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"To decide otherwise would require us to apply one set of constitutional principles to gay persons and another to all others," Palmer wrote.

Gov. M. Jodi Rell said Friday that she disagreed, but will not fight the ruling.

"The Supreme Court has spoken," Rell said in a statement. "I do not believe their voice reflects the majority of the people of Connecticut. However, I am also firmly convinced that attempts to reverse this decision -- either legislatively or by amending the state Constitution -- will not meet with success."

The lawsuit was brought in 2004 after eight same-sex couples were denied marriage licenses and sued, saying their constitutional rights to equal protection and due process were violated.

They said the state's marriage law, if applied only to heterosexual couples, denied them of the financial, social and emotional benefits of marriage.

Peck said that as soon as the decision was announced, the couple started crying and hugging while juggling excited phone calls from her brother and other friends and family.

"We've always dreamed of being married," she said. "Even though we were lesbians and didn't know if that would ever come true, we always dreamed of it."

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