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Reactions on Conn.'s same-sex marriage ruling

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A collection of quotes and reactions about the Connecticut Supreme Court's ruling Friday that same-sex couples have the constitutional right to marry:

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

- Supreme Court Justice Richard N. Palmer, writing for the majority in the 4-3 ruling. ----

"I'm just ecstatic. It's such a relief, the joy of it."

- Elizabeth Kerrigan of West Hartford, lead plaintiff with her partner of 14 years, Jody Mock. ----

"We recognized we were essentially stripped of our marriage ... We were married and we didn't want to take a step backward and accept a civil union."

- Brian Rice, whose 2004 Massachusetts marriage to partner Jason Kelliher was not recognized when they moved to Stamford. ----

"Even the legislature, as liberal as ours, decided that marriage is between a man and a woman. This is about our right to govern ourselves. It is bigger than gay marriage."

- Peter Wolfgang, executive director of the Family Institute of Connecticut, which opposes gay marriage. ----

"I acknowledge that, because of its name, civil union is a different status from marriage. ... I am unable to say that it is widely considered to be less than or inferior to marriage, or that it does not bring with it the same social recognition as marriage. It is simply too early to know this with any reasonable measure of certitude."

- Senior Associate Justice David M. Borden, who dissented from the majority opinion. ----

"The State Supreme Court is the ultimate authority on all state law, and its ruling on the state constitution must be respected."

- Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, whose office argued against the same-sex couples' claims. ----



"The Supreme Court has spoken. 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."

- Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell. ----

"The plaintiffs, advocates and above all, the people of Connecticut, should celebrate this civil rights victory."

- Connecticut state Senate Speaker Donald Williams, D-Brooklyn. ----

"The ancient definition of marriage as the union of one man and one woman has its basis in biology, not bigotry. If the state no longer has an interest in the regulation of procreation, then that is a decision for the legislature or the people of the state and not this court."

- Justice Peter Zarella, who dissented from the majority opinion. ----

"What we're hearing is an increasing conversation about the importance of full marriage equality, about the impact to same sex couples and their children in having what essentially is a separate, but equal institution."

- Joe Solmonese, president of the Human Rights Campaign in Washington, D.C. ----

"Carol and I have dreamed of being married for all of our 33 years together. I so look forward to the day when I take this woman's hand, look into her eyes and I pledge my deep love and support and commitment to her in marriage. For 33 years my heart has ached for that moment, and today I know that the ache is going to now be replaced with tremendous, wonderful joy, and that our love that we've felt for all these years will finally be complete."

- Janet Peck of Colchester, a plaintiff with her partner, Carole Conklin. ----

"For 28 years, we have been engaged. Now we can register at Home Depot as we prepare for marriage."

- Garrett Stack of Woodbridge, a plaintiff with his partner, John Anderson. ---

"In this country we don't have two standards of law, we have one standard of justice for everyone and that is the principle that the Connecticut Supreme Court indicated today."

- Mary Bonauto, Civil Rights Project Director at Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders, who represented the plaintiffs. ---

State Sen. Michael Lawlor, the co-chairman of the legislature's Judiciary Committee, said the decision is very similar to the Brown vs. Board of Education ruling in the 1950s that outlawed segregated schools.

"You have to have a reason to have two separate laws for two different types of people. You have to have a reason for this type of discrimination, and it has to be pretty compelling."

- Connecticut State Sen. Michael Lawlor, co-chairman of the legislature's Judiciary Committee.

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