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**GLBT Groups Hail CT Supreme Court Decision**

by Joe Siegel  
EDGE New England Editor  
Friday Oct 10, 2008

A number of GLBT organizations have praised today's ruling of the Connecticut Supreme Court allowing same-sex couples to be married in that state.



Carol Conklin, left, embraces her partner, Janet Peck, after Peck spoke at a news conference in Hartford, Conn., Friday, Oct. 10, 2008. Peck was commenting on ruling by the Connecticut Supreme Court making gay marriage. Connecticut's Supreme Court ruled Friday that gay couples have the right to marry, making the state the third behind Massachusetts and California to legalize such unions. (Source:AP/Bob Child)

The decision will likely to take effect shortly after November 7.

"We're elated," said attorney Bennett Klein of GLAD (Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders), which filed the lawsuit in August 2004 on behalf of eight same-sex couples. "Today's victory fulfills the hopes and dreams of gay and lesbian families to live as full and equal citizens in Connecticut. Marriage is unparalleled in the dignity, respect, and protection it gives families." GLAD brought the lawsuits that led to marriage equality in Massachusetts in 2004 and civil unions in Vermont in 2000.

In April 2005, eight months after the lawsuit was filed, Connecticut's legislature approved, and the governor signed, a civil union law. In May 2007, GLAD argued before the Supreme Court that the denial of marriage by the civil union law was arbitrary and failed to provide gay and lesbian citizens with the equal treatment the constitution requires.

"This is just an extraordinary day," said Beth Kerrigan on behalf of herself and her partner, Jodie Mock, the named plaintiffs in the case. "We are overjoyed to tell our twin boys that we will be married, just like their friends' parents. We are profoundly grateful to live in a state which recognizes our equality."

"We salute the plaintiffs, who hung in there through thick and thin," said GLAD Executive Director Lee Swislow. "We are also profoundly grateful to Love Makes a Family (LMF) for advancing and elevating the conversation about gay and lesbian issues. They deserve a great deal of credit for this amazing win. And we recognize the critical role Connecticut's legislature played in moving the ball forward with civil unions."

"Today, the Connecticut Supreme Court did their job and rightfully upheld the freedom to marry provided for in the Connecticut state constitution. With Connecticut joining

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**day" - Plaintiff Beth Kerrigan**

California and Massachusetts, and other countries around the world, Americans will yet again be given the chance to experience the lived reality that ending exclusion from marriage helps families and harms no one," said Evan Wolfson, executive director of Freedom to Marry and author of Why Marriage Matters: America, Equality and Gay People's Right to Marry.

"Marriage Equality Rhode Island is very excited to see that our gay and lesbian neighbors in Connecticut now have access to all of the rights and responsibilities of civil marriage. We remain saddened for our own gay and lesbian citizens who do not have that civil right here at home," said Susan Heroux, chairperson of the Marriage Equality Rhode Island Education Fund Board of Directors (MERI).

"Rhode Island has become an island of inequality surrounded by states that treat their gay and lesbian citizens with dignity and respect by affording them an equal right to marry. Marriage is a significant social status and provides security that gay and lesbian Rhode Islanders deserve to have as human beings. It's time for Rhode Island to catch up to its neighbors in this important civil rights area. We call on Rhode Island's Legislators and the Governor to change the law to allow us civil marriage and keep Rhode Island on the forefront of civil rights," she said.

Gay marriage opponents also weighed in on the historic ruling.

Matt Barber, Director of Cultural Affairs with both Liberty Alliance Action and Liberty Counsel, and Associate Dean with Liberty University School of Law,\* released the following statement today in response to news that the Connecticut Supreme Court has imposed "same-sex marriage" on the citizens of Connecticut.

"Today, Connecticut's high court ruled that its state constitution led "inevitably to the conclusion" that men and women who are so inclined, have a 'right' to 'marry' someone of the same sex. The 'inevitable conclusion' the Connecticut Supreme Court reached is only inevitable in the minds of judicial activists who are hell-bent on imposing, through judicial fiat, their own skewed ideology on 'we the people'," Barber added.

*Joe Siegel has written for a number of other GLBT publications, including In newsweekly and Options.*

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