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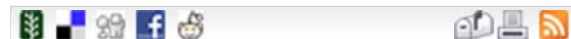
HOMEPAGE / CONNECTICUT NEWS

First Same-Sex Wedding In CT May Be Days Away

Rell Says She'll Abide By Ruling, Despite Disagreement

Stephanie Berning, Joshua Rafuse, Staff Writers

POSTED: 10:46 am EDT October 10, 2008
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In a decision that sent shouts of joy coupled with clamors for appeals Friday, Connecticut's Supreme Court said gay couples have the legal right to wed.

The issue was brought up through a lawsuit that challenged Connecticut's marriage law as unconstitutional because it discriminated against same-sex couples. Eight same-sex couples sued in 2004. They said their constitutional rights to equal protection and due process were violated when they were denied marriage licenses.

[Plaintiffs Revel In Supreme Court's Decision](#)

Lead plaintiffs in the case, Beth Kerrigan and Jodi Mock, of West Hartford, said they and their twin sons will finally feel like a socially accepted family.

"What a difference today makes," Kerrigan said. "It's a great day."

"For 28 years we have been engaged," said plaintiff Garrett Stack of Woodbridge with his partner, John Anderson. "Now we can register at Home Depot as we prepare for marriage."

Same-sex couples looking to marry will not have to wait for the Legislature to tweak Connecticut statute. Attorney General Richard Blumenthal said clerks could begin issuing marriage certificates as early as Oct. 28, when Friday's ruling becomes effective.

"Carol and I have dreamed of being married for all of our 22 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," said plaintiff Janet Peck, of Colchester. "For 33 years my heart has ached for that moment,

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Kerrigan vs. Commissioner Of Public Health

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Events Leading To Decision

- **2004:** 8 same-sex couples file suit, claiming violation of constitutional rights
- **2005:** State approves civil unions

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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."

The controversial decision did not bring euphoria to all, however.

The Family Institute had fought to keep marriage solely between a man and a woman.

"Four unelected judges decided to change the definition of marriage," said Peter Wolfgang of the Family Institute. "This is an outrage."

"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, Plaintiff In Case

The governor expressed her displeasure with the ruling as well.

"I disagree with today's State Supreme Court

ruling, but as governor, I will uphold it," said Rell. "I continue to believe that marriage is the union of a man and a woman. The Supreme Court has spoken," she said. "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. I will therefore abide by the ruling."

Although the state approved civil unions in 2005, attorneys for Gay & Lesbian Advocates & Defenders (GLAD) said Friday's decision means something both emotional and legal and said one of the protections of marriage is marriage itself.

Currently, Massachusetts and California are the only other states that allow same-sex couples to marry.

According to studies performed out of UCLA, there are more than 9,500 same-sex couples in Connecticut.

The study said that if Connecticut follows a similar pattern to Massachusetts, about 3,000 same-sex couples will marry in the next year and 4,700 will likely wed after three years.


The school said that its studies are based on analysis of the 2007 US Census Bureau's Community Survey.

- **Oct. 10, 2008:** Supreme Court rules in favor of same-sex marriages

Reaction To Supreme Court Decision

- [Statement From Gov. Rell](#)
- [Attorney General's Statement](#)
- [Sen. Andrew McDonald Statement](#)
- [Love Makes A Family Statement](#)
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