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## Gay marriage overcomes historic hurdle in Conn.

AAA

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In a historic 4-3 ruling on Friday, the Connecticut Supreme Court reversed a state ban on same-sex marriage, effective Oct. 28.

Connecticut now becomes the third state to legalize gay marriage, following Massachusetts and California.

Gay and lesbian advocates called the ruling, which cannot be appealed because the case involves the state constitution, “a turning point on gay issues,” in the words of George Chauncey, an expert on gay marriage and director of Yale’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Studies program.

Republican Gov. M. Jodi Rell has said that she will — begrudgingly — uphold the ruling. In a statement Friday, Rell said she is “firmly convinced that attempts to reverse this decision, either legislatively or by amending the state Constitution, will not meet with success.” And other Republican politicians have lambasted the Court for legislating from the bench.

Meanwhile, Democratic legislators in Hartford have called the decision “thrilling.” But they also said they worry about the decision’s timing: one month before Election Day. The month is more than enough time, state Democrats said, for several Catholic and anti-gay-marriage groups to possibly rile up Connecticut voters to have a constitutional convention to overturn the divided Court.

### COGNIZABLE HARM

In language that harkened to past bans on interracial marriage and legal exclusion of blacks and women, the Court ruled that banning gay marriage, even when allowing civil unions, violates equal protection.

Justice Richard Palmer argued in the majority opinion, joined by Yale lecturer Flemming Norcott Jr., that separating heterosexual and homosexual couples into “separate institutions” is a “cognizable harm.”

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

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