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NEWS

Thursday, August 26, 2004

Group to sue Connecticut over marriage law

A gay rights organization that successfully challenged the Massachusetts marriage law planned to announce Wednesday that it will contest the constitutionality of Connecticut's marriage laws, which exclude same-sex couples.



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Events calendar

Letters

Weekly news

Subscriber services

Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders is joining forces with the Connecticut Civil Liberties Union to try to make Connecticut the next staging ground in the fight for same-sex marriage rights. A news conference was scheduled at a downtown Hartford hotel at 2 p.m. GLAD was to file the lawsuit Wednesday in New Haven superior court. Seven Connecticut couples are plaintiffs in the case.

The lead attorney for the Connecticut legal challenge will be Mary Bonauto, according to Carisa Cunningham, a GLAD spokeswoman. Bonauto represented the seven gay couples in the landmark Massachusetts case that led to the legalization of gay marriage in that state, effective May 17. She was also involved in the Vermont case, where same-sex couples can now engage in civil unions.

Katy and Kristen Gossman of Meriden, who were married in Massachusetts in May, are plaintiffs in a different case challenging a 1913 Massachusetts denying marriages to out-of-state couples whose unions would not be legally recognized in their home states, a law that effectively bars all gay couples who live outside of Massachusetts from marrying there. They said they hope to see the marriage laws change in Connecticut so they can save their own marriage. "We're happy about this lawsuit because if we win, then there would be no questions asked about our marriage license in Massachusetts," said Katy Gossman, a special agent with the FBI.

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