



An Oklahoma Where Everyone is Equal

MEDIA STATEMENT

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Federal Court Declares Ban on Same-Sex Marriage Unconstitutional

TULSA – The Equality Network – Oklahoma’s statewide advocacy organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights – today praised the historic decision of Chief Judge Vaughn Walker of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California in *Perry v. Schwarzenegger*, which ruled that Proposition 8, a 2008 ballot initiative that amended California’s constitution to ban same-sex marriage, violates the U.S. Constitution’s guarantees of due process and equal protection.

“We share wholeheartedly Judge Walker’s belief that ‘excluding same-sex couples from marriage is simply not rationally related to a legitimate state interest.’” declared Kathy L. Williams, Ph.D., president of the Equality Network.

“All Americans deserve access to the 1,147 federal benefits and rights enjoyed by married couples. This decision upholds the traditions of liberty and equality embedded in the U.S. Constitution, and affirms that the law cannot treat people differently based upon whom they love or the vicissitudes of a majority vote to strip a minority of its fundamental freedoms.” Williams added.

While today’s ruling is a major milestone on the path for full equality for LGBT Americans, the ruling does not immediately reinstitute same-sex marriage in California and the case now heads to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit, and may ultimately be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court.

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[The Equality Network](http://www.theequalitynetwork.org) works to achieve equality and to secure legal protection for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Oklahomans through advocacy, coalition building, and individual empowerment in the political process.