

Archives

- Search
- News Archives
- Sports Archives
- Obit Archives

Services

- Accident Reports
- Advertising
- Archives
- Contact Us
- Place an Ad Online
- RSS Feeds
- Mailing List
- Buy Sports Photos
- Subscribe
- Bill Pay

DailyJournalOnline.com → Archives → **The fate of Connecticut's same-sex marriage lawsuit is now in hands of state's high court**

[E-Mail to a Friend](#) [Printable Version](#) [Comment](#) (No comments posted.)

The fate of Connecticut's same-sex marriage lawsuit is now in hands of state's high court

By STEPHANIE REITZ
Associated Press Writer
May 15, 2007 - 11:08:41 CDT

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — The long-simmering question of whether same-sex couples in Connecticut should be allowed to marry is now in the hands of seven state Supreme Court justices.

Arguments in the potentially groundbreaking case wrapped up in about three hours Monday, but it likely will be months before justices rule on the lawsuit that eight same-sex couples originally filed in August 2004.

The couples, who have been together between 13 and 31 years, allege their equal protection and due process were violated when they were denied marriage licenses in Madison Town Hall.

Their case also raises questions about whether the state's 2005 civil unions law — the first adopted nationwide without court pressure — helped or hurt same-sex couples in their quest for equality.

The plaintiffs want the court to rule that the state's marriage law discriminates against them because it applies only to heterosexual couples, therefore denying gay couples the financial, social and emotional benefits of marriage.

"What is denied to these families is something that goes to the heart of equal protection, which is the right to be part of the fabric of society when they are just the same as other couples and other families," said their attorney, Bennett Klein.

The state argued Monday that Connecticut's civil unions law gives the couples the equality they seek, and that the issue is a policy question best left to lawmakers rather than judges.

"All of those rights and benefits, at least under state law, have been granted," Assistant Attorney General Jane Rosenberg said. "From a legal perspective, there are no rights that have been taken away from that group and, in fact, equal rights have now been given to that group."

As several states consider civil union laws, the Connecticut case could have nationwide ramifications. People on both sides said Monday they are well aware of its significance.

"Our 9-year-old said it best: 'How is the world supposed to get better if nothing changes?'" said Geraldine Artis of Clinton, who is a plaintiff along with her partner of 13 years, Suzanne Artis.

One recurring theme at Monday's hearing was whether gays and lesbians should be considered a protected group, a legal term for a segment of the population that, among other things, is particularly

Search the archives

Last 30 Days

[Advanced Search](#)

Most Commented News

Last 30 days

- [Child walks away from school](#) (143)
- [Halbrook, Neeley could face up to life in prison](#) (93)
- [Local dentist charged with child molestation](#) (40)
- [Corrections employee admits to having sex with inmate](#) (40)
- [Police arrest couple second time for making meth](#) (28)

Most Commented Sports

Last 30 days

- [MABA Sign-ups and Try-outs](#) (75)
- [Rebels win MAAA Tournament as seventh seed](#) (14)
- [Knights halt Raiders' reign in MAAA tourney](#) (11)
- [Farmington drops two more in Mississippi](#) (7)
- [Farmington adds another district title](#) (4)

YOU'LL NEVER GET 150 MILLION AMERICANS TO AGREE ON ANYTHING ABOUT THE NEWS. EXCEPT WHERE TO FIND IT.

NEWSPAPER. THE MULTI-MEDIUM.

Newspaper Association of America
CLICK TO FIND OUT MORE

Top Ads

Top Homes

[More Top Homes...](#)

vulnerable to discrimination and lacks political power.

Peter Wolfgang, public policy director for the Family Institute of Connecticut, which opposes same-sex marriage, said that claim is weak. He cited the existence of Connecticut's civil unions law, the growing number of openly gay lawmakers in powerful positions, and a recent legislative committee vote in favor of same-sex marriages.

"I think it would be very hard to argue that gays and lesbians are powerless in Connecticut in 2007," Wolfgang said after the hearing.

If justices agree with the same-sex couples, they could order the case back to the trial court, with instructions to rule in favor of the couples. They could also order the General Assembly to consider overhauling the current marriage laws.

Currently, only Massachusetts allows same-sex couples to marry.

Connecticut, Vermont, California, New Jersey, Maine and Washington have laws allowing either civil unions or domestic partnerships, and a civil unions law is expected to take effect in New Hampshire in January. Hawaii extends certain spousal rights to same-sex couples and cohabiting heterosexual pairs.

 [E-Mail to a Friend](#)  [Printable Version](#)  [Comment](#) (No comments posted.)

 **Reader Comments (No comments posted.)**

The comments below are from readers of DailyJournalOnline.com and in no way represent the views of the Daily Journal or Lee Enterprises.

[Leave your own comment](#)

Leave a Comment

Please refrain from using in your comment:

- Potentially libelous statements; Personal attacks, threats, or harassment; Obscene, explicit, or racist language; Product advertisements

We will not edit your comments, but we do reserve the right not to publish comments. If you have questions, or to report a comment email the [Blog Administrator](#).

There is a 100 word limit on your comment.

Name:



[More Top Ads...](#)

Copyright © 2000-2007 Daily Journal Online. All rights reserved. [Privacy Policy](#) | [Top of Page](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Archives](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Home Page](#) | [RSS Feeds](#)
 In Memory of Joe Layden.