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MARRIAGE EQUALITY OPPONENTS FAIL IN EFFORT TO PLACE DISCRIMINATORY  
MEASURE ON CALIFORNIA'S NOVEMBER 2006 BALLOT

For the second time in a year, California conservative activists have failed to qualify an anti-marriage equality measure for the statewide ballot, according to Equality for All, the statewide campaign to defeat such measures.

Equality for All today declared victory after opponents of marriage equality failed to qualify any of their discriminatory, anti-gay constitutional amendments for the November, 2006 ballot. California is the only state where such attempts to amend the constitution to ban marriage and domestic partnerships for same sex couples have been unsuccessful.

"Today, we are proud to be Californians, where opponents of equality for California families are unable to gather the support they need to place an anti-equality measure on the ballot. And they've failed not once, but twice in 2006. This is a moment for fair-minded Californians to be proud, but not to let up," said Dale Kelly Bankhead, campaign manager for Equality for All.

"It is clear that our strong opposition and early fundraising were part of the reason these extremists have had difficulty gaining support for these discriminatory measures," Bankhead said, "in addition to the fact that Californians are tired of these divisive and costly campaigns."

"In spite of filing 14 nearly-identical initiatives, these religious and political extremists failed to qualify even one for the upcoming elections," said Lorri L. Jean, chief executive officer of the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center, and executive committee member of the Equality for All campaign.

"However, we believe it is a matter of not if we face such a ballot measure in California, but when. We remain committed to a vigorous opposition of these types of measures, whenever they occur," Jean said. "Those who oppose equality are already circulating petitions for the next statewide election in June of 2008. We will continue to monitor those efforts and to educate voters about the cost of marriage discrimination and how a repeal of the existing domestic partnership protections would truly harm California families."

Proponents of placing a marriage equality and domestic partnership ban in the state constitution have told the media and their supporters that they expect events between now and 2008 to trigger support for such discriminatory measures. It is likely that two such triggering events would include the passage of legislation to secure marriage equality in state law and a court ruling finding marriage discrimination unconstitutional. Marriage legislation, sponsored by the statewide LGBT advocacy group, Equality California, was passed in 2005, but

vetoed by Governor Schwarzenegger. The bill will be re-introduced during the 2007-08 legislative session.

Constitutional litigation is currently working its way through the court system, with a state appeals court ruling anticipated in 2007, followed by review by the California Supreme Court. San Francisco Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer ruled in 2005 in the case of *Woo v. Lockyer* that excluding same sex couples from marriage was unconstitutional.

"As the effort to achieve marriage equality moves forward in the courts and the legislature, it is imperative that all fair-minded Californians get involved by voting in every election and by speaking out against discrimination and in support of equality for all," said Geoffrey Kors, executive director of Equality California and a member of the Equality for All executive committee.

Equality for All is a coalition of more than 25 diverse LGBT and allied organizations that was created in 2005 to defeat any anti-marriage measures placed on the California ballot. Member groups include Equality California; the National Center for Lesbian Rights; the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force; Lambda Legal; PFLAG and other family groups; the ACLU; California NOW, Planned Parenthood; the GLBT Centers of San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego; and groups representing the religious, Latino, African American, and Asian and Pacific Islander American communities. EFA has raised almost \$750,000 - nearly four times as much as their opponents - and has established a grassroots network of volunteers who have identified thousands of voters who support marriage equality for same sex couples. More information about the Equality for All campaign is available at [www.EqualityforAll.com](http://www.EqualityforAll.com). Visitors to the website can also sign up for ongoing campaign updates.

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