



Wisconsin Supreme Court refuses to hear gay partner suit

By OnTopMag.com

The Wisconsin Supreme Court has rejected a legal challenge to the state's gay partner law, the AP reported.

Opponents of the law argue that Governor Jim Doyle's gay-inclusive domestic partnership is unconstitutional because it violates the state's constitutional amendment banning marriage and civil unions for gay and lesbian couples.

Doyle, a Democrat, lobbied for the legislation that extends a limited number of protections for gay couples when he tucked away the provision inside his biannual state budget approved by lawmakers. Most of the 43 rights granted to couples center around estate planning and hospital visitation issues. More than 900 couples have applied for the benefits since the law's August 3 start.

Opponents took heart in the fact that the court offered no explanation in its order and quickly announced they would refile their challenge in a lower court.

The group Wisconsin Family Action (WFA), which supported passage of the anti-gay marriage amendment as the Family Research Institute and is being represented by the Christian-based Alliance Defense Fund (ADF), said the court's decision "implies nothing about the merits of the constitutional challenge."

Wisconsin Attorney General John Byron "J.B." Van Hollen has refused to defend the law, calling it unconstitutional, forcing the state to hire attorney Lester Pines to defend the policy.

The registry made Wisconsin the first state with a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage to recognize the unions of gay and lesbian couples.