



## Illinois' attorney general supports challenge to same-sex marriage ban

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CHICAGO, IL -- Illinois' attorney general Lisa Madigan will support two lawsuits filed last week that challenge the constitutionality of the state's gay marriage ban.

Madigan's office filed a notice Friday in Cook County Circuit Court saying it will support the two legal challenges.

The attorney general asks "to present the Court with arguments that explain why the challenged statutory provisions do not satisfy the guarantee of equality under the Illinois Constitution."

"It's no surprise that Attorney General Lisa Madigan, responsible for assessing the state's position on the constitutionality of its various laws, would find the marriage ban indefensible," national marriage project director for Lambda Legal Camilla Taylor [said in a statement](#). "The marriage ban targets same-sex couples and their children for discriminatory treatment. Illinois elected officials at every level of state and federal government have come to the same conclusion that we have — that the marriage ban harms these families, and that it's just time to end this discriminatory chapter of our history."

The ACLU and gay rights group Lambda Legal Wednesday [brought two separate lawsuits](#), representing 25 gay and lesbian couples from across Illinois, against Cook County Clerk David Orr challenging the state on marriage equality.

Orr has gone on record in support of marriage equality.

The lawsuits, which make some of the same arguments used in Iowa and California, come a year after Illinois enacted civil unions.

Critics, including many of the couples in the lawsuit, argue civil unions have not proven to be the answer for LGBT families in Illinois, who need the protections that only marriage can provide.

A new [survey released Friday](#) by [Equality Illinois](#), the state's oldest and largest LGBT advocacy organization, shows couples in civil unions endured clear and consistent patterns of unequal treatment, were denied rights and protections and faced stigmatization despite the intent of the law that civil unions be equal to marriages.

In May, Gov. Pat Quinn (D-Illinois) joined President Obama [in support of marriage equality](#) for gay and lesbian couples.

Same-sex marriage is legal in Connecticut, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Vermont, Washington state as well as the District of Columbia.

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