

Dozens Of Major Corporations File Amicus Brief In Support Of Marriage Equality In Florida



by [JEAN ANN ESSELINK](#)

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On the Defence side: The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the National Association of Evangelicals. On the Plaintiff side: Delta Airlines and Oracle. See who else has weighed into the Florida marriage case.

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The weddings are due to start in Florida, January 6 - at [least in some counties](#) - but recent legal arguments have been over whether the stay on same-sex marriages would expire on that date or be extended. The underlying case is still making its way through the courts and is currently on appeal to the 11th Circuit.

In anticipation of that hearing, interested parties have been flooding the court with amicus briefs, both for and against.

According to [Law 360](#), voicing support for continuing the state's ban on same-sex marriage are the Conference of Catholic Bishops, the National Association of Evangelicals and all the usual religious objectors who have joined together in a

brief that says:

"Our theological perspectives, though often differing, converge on a critical point: that marriage between a man and a woman is vital to the welfare of children, families, and society."

The brief makes a point of assuring the court that their opposition to same-sex marriage does not come from an "anti-gay animus" but is based on "marriage affirming religious beliefs that merge with both practical experience and sociological fact."

Scholars of Federalism and Judicial Restraint also filed an amicus brief in support of the state, urging the court to take extra care in considering "novel expansions of liberty and equality interests," insisting it is the states' role to be "laboratories of democracy".

Among the supporters of marriage equality who have filed briefs are four Florida counties; the cities of Miami Beach, Key West, Orlando, Tampa, Tallahassee and St. Petersburg. There are also more than 200 signers each on briefs filed by first responders and law enforcement and by pro-gay religious communities.

Also filing in support of the plaintiffs are Equality Florida and all the usual LGBT support organizations, and Professor Gary Gates, research director at the UCLA School of Law and a member of the Scientific Advisory Committee of the U.S. Census Bureau. Professor Gates offered the court demographic and economic data showing there to be 97,000 same-sex couples in Florida, with nearly one in six raising children.

Now, [Joe My God](#) is reporting that an impressive list of major corporations have signed on to an amicus brief in support of the Florida plaintiffs, including Amazon, AT&T, Bloomberg, CBS, Delta, Deutsche Bank, eBay, Electronic Arts, General Electric, Levi Strauss, Marriott, Oracle, Pfizer, Staples, Symantec, Target, and Viacom.

From their brief:

"State laws and constitutions denying marriage to gay and lesbian citizens are bad for our businesses. Amici are forced to bear unnecessary costs, complexity, and risk in managing our companies, and we are hampered in our efforts to recruit and retain the most talented workforce possible—all of which places us at a competitive disadvantage. Our success depends upon the welfare and morale of all employees, without distinction. The burden—imposed by state law—of having to administer complicated schemes designed to

account for differential treatment of similarly situated employees interferes with our business and creates unnecessary confusion, tension, and ultimately, diminished employee morale. We write to advise the Court of the impact on employers of the disparate treatment mandated by states that refuse to permit or recognize marriages between same-sex couples."

Nadine Smith, CEO of Equality Florida, was heartened by the depth of support, saying in a statement:

"The breadth and depth of these amici briefs demonstrate the groundswell of support for the freedom to marry. We believe when the 11th Circuit justices consider this case and makes note of the diversity of support, they, too, will affirm the right of everyone to marry the person they love."

The 11th Circuit has not yet scheduled oral arguments.