



PO Box 1327 • Madison WI 53701-1327
608-268-5074 (Madison) • 866-849-2536 (toll-free) • 608-256-3370 (fax)
Email: info@wifamilyaction.org
Web site: www.wifamilyaction.org
Blog: <http://blog.wifamilyaction.com>

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Contact: Julaine K. Appling, President – 866-849-2536
Fax: 608-256-3370
Email: info@wifamilyaction.org

PRO-FAMILY GROUP DEFENDS THE PEOPLE, THE CONSTITUTION, AND MARRIAGE IN NEW LAWSUIT

*President and board members of Wisconsin Family Action file lawsuit
asserting Gov. Doyle's statewide, same-sex domestic partnership registry is unconstitutional*

MADISON—Wednesday, Julaine Appling, president of Wisconsin Family Action (WFA), together with WFA board members Jo Egelhoff, Jerry Hiller, Richard Kessenich and E. Lee Webster, through their attorneys with the [Alliance Defense Fund](#), filed [a complaint with the Dane County Circuit Court](#), asking it to declare the statewide, same-sex only “domestic partner” registry unconstitutional. Governor Doyle approved the registry as a part of the state’s two-year budget last summer.

The plaintiffs and their attorneys believe the registry violates the Wisconsin Marriage Amendment approved by nearly 60 percent of Wisconsin voters in November 2006 by creating a legal status substantially similar to that of marriage in direct violation of the Wisconsin Constitution, Article 13, Section 13.

“Our system of government serves no purpose if our elected officials can completely and capriciously ignore the will of the people with impunity,” said Appling. “A reasonable person observing this registry would easily conclude that it is intended to mirror marriage. It borrows the requirements and eligibility standards for marriage, even to the point of requiring that the price of the registry certificate be the same as for a marriage license.”

“Politicians shouldn’t defy the will of voters who legitimately amended the Wisconsin Constitution in a fair election,” said ADF Senior Counsel Brian Raum. “This domestic partnership scheme is precisely the type of marriage imitation that the constitutional amendment approved by Wisconsin voters was intended to prevent. Those who are determined to tamper with marriage in Wisconsin are attempting an end-run attack hoping they can evade the clear language of the state constitution.”

“Over 1.25 million voters legitimately amended the state constitution in a fair election. This registry is nothing more than political payback from Governor Doyle to those who helped him get re-elected in 2006 and a stealth attack on marriage by those who are determined to redefine marriage in the Badger State. The Governor and the legislators who approved the registry will not get a free pass for being obviously more concerned with advancing the agenda of a fringe activist group than representing the people who elected them,” noted Appling.

Plaintiffs are represented by Wisconsin ADF allied attorneys Richard M. Esenberg, Michael D. Dean with First Freedoms Foundation, and attorneys Austin Nimocks and Brian Raum with the Alliance Defense Fund, which is serving as lead counsel.

The complaint can be read [here](#).

-30-

Wisconsin Family Action is a statewide, not-for-profit organization actively strengthening and preserving marriage, family, life and liberty in Wisconsin.