



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 26, 2006, New York, NY
Tel: 212-851-8418 x6, Mobile: 917-617-8660

PRESS CONTACT
Samiya Bashir
Email: samiya@freedomtomarry.org

WA STATE SUPREME COURT DECLINES TO END EXCLUSION FROM MARRIAGE IN 5-4 DECISION

SPLIT OPINION, POWERFUL DISSENTS, DELIVERED THIS MORNING

Statement by Evan Wolfson, executive director of Freedom to Marry and author of *Why Marriage Matters: America, Equality and Gay People's Right to Marry* (Simon & Schuster):

In 1790, George Washington declared, "As Mankind becomes more liberal, they will be more apt to allow that all those who conduct themselves as worthy members of the community are equally entitled to the protections of civil government. I hope ever to see America among the foremost nations of justice and liberality."

Today the Washington Supreme Court fell short of this principle of fairness, failing to end the exclusion of committed gay couples and their kids from marriage, with all its protections, security, and meaning.

Today's decision means that the pointless exclusion from marriage will continue to be an obstacle in these families' lives, even as the struggle to end discrimination in Washington shifts now to the legislature and the court of public opinion.

If, as our society believes, marriage is so important for non-gay families and a fundamental right under the constitution, why isn't that true for gay couples? Why when gay couples are involved does the freedom to marry become so trivial that their exclusion only warrants the lowest level of "highly deferential" review?

By 5-4, these judges failed to do their job. Now the legislators must do their job, acting to end this discrimination, while we do ours, speaking out about who gay families are and why marriage matters.

#