

BASF joined amicus briefs in the U.S. Supreme Court and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals

June 26, 2013 – San Francisco, California – The Bar Association of San Francisco (BASF) applauds the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling today dismissing *Hollingsworth v. Perry*, which leaves intact the District Court ruling striking down California’s 2008 voter-approved Proposition 8 and opens the door to the resumption of same-sex marriages in the State of California.

In hearing the ruling, BASF President Christopher C. Kearney, Kecker & Van Nest LLP, said, “Today is a landmark day for Californians and a giant step forward in the fight for LGBT equality nationwide. The United States Supreme Court’s dismissal of the *Hollingsworth v. Perry* case on standing grounds removes the blight Proposition 8 has imposed on all Californians, thus allows LGBT Californians to marry once again, and restores to them and their families the equal treatment and equal dignity they deserve.”

BASF joined amicus briefs in the U.S. Supreme Court and Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals urging a determination that the United States Constitution guarantees same-sex couples the right to marry in every state and provides the greatest protection available against discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Although the Supreme Court did not reach the merits of the case—a prerequisite to finding as BASF had urged—the Court’s dismissal means that the District Court ruling striking down Proposition 8 will stand. BASF applauds that long-awaited result, and is proud to have been a part of this historic case.

BASF has long championed access to justice for all people, and has been in the vanguard of the fight for LGBT equality in California. In the 1990s, BASF issued the first published study of sexual orientation bias by an organized bar association and urged its member firms and legal departments to adopt best practices to ensure the retention and advancement of LGBT lawyers. In 2007, BASF once again published a groundbreaking study of best practices in the hiring, retention, and advancement of LGBT lawyers.

BASF has also worked hard to secure marriage equality for the LGBT community. Because equality requires equality for everyone—not just the privileged or the majority—BASF filed amicus briefs in support of the successful effort to secure the right under the California Constitution of LGBT couples to marry. After Proposition 8 was placed on the ballot, BASF’s Marriage Fairness Task Force galvanized the San Francisco legal community, and over 40 bar associations around the state, to oppose the initiative. BASF’s Leadership Council for Equality raised voter awareness and supported organizations who raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for that effort. When the initiative passed, BASF supported the federal challenge to Proposition 8 at every stage of the legal battle, through amicus briefs and pro bono legal work. BASF also issued numerous statements condemning the initiative, and later the baseless attacks on Chief Judge Vaughn Walker of the United States District Court for the Northern District of California.

BASF joined amicus briefs in the U.S. Supreme Court and the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals (continued)

Amy Todd-Gher, Valdez Noor Todd & Doyle LLP, and Robert Augustine Depew, Employment Law Resources Group, co-chairs of BASF's LGBT Committee issued a joint statement saying, "We are proud today, as officers of the justice system and as human beings, that these efforts have helped restore to LGBT Californians the fundamental right to marry. And we pledge that BASF will continue to support the fight for justice and equality for the LGBT community—and for all people—in California and across the country."

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The Bar Association of San Francisco (BASF) is a nonprofit voluntary membership organization of over 8,000 attorneys, law students and legal professionals in the Bay Area. Founded in 1872, BASF is one of the largest and most dynamic metropolitan bar associations in the U.S., with a long and distinguished record of community action, public service and service to the legal profession.