

Testimony by Rabbi Jeffrey Glickman
in Favor of HB 7395: An Act Concerning Marriage Equality
March 26, 2007

My name is Rabbi Jeffrey Glickman, and I am a resident of South Windsor. I am here today in support of marriage equality for same-sex couples.

I stand here today, not as leader of the Greater Hartford Rabbinic Association, which I was honored to head, not as chaplain of the South Windsor Fire and Police Departments where I serve, and not as the spiritual leader of Temple Beth Hillel of South Windsor, a position I have held for over a decade--but on my own merits, as a citizen of South Windsor who has an opinion to share. That opinion has been shaped by nine years of study capped by ordination followed by twenty years of service to faith communities as Rabbi.

The state and religious communities do not operate in entirely different realms. The State derives power from the people whose ethics are shaped by their religious belief. The State can also confer privileges to those whom a faith community has chosen to honor. This is particularly true for those whom the faith community has honored through the religious ritual of marriage.

As a rabbi, I strive to understand our ancient truths and apply them to today.

The Bible does not speak, directly, of monogamous, committed, loving homosexual relationships. When such a relationship is blessed by a rabbi, as I have done, these relationships become holy. I have seen first hand that the ability to be a loving, nourishing, cherishing spouse is in no way dependant on sexual orientation. The same is certainly true for child rearing.

We have learned, through the degradation and struggles of others, that separate but equal is only a cruel façade. It is an illusion of generosity towards the minority for the sole purpose of alleviating guilt.

Only today do we give equal legal status to African-Americans, to Native-Americans, to women, to those with physical disabilities. The United States of America is made greater by these hard fought battles of civil rights.

Similarly, a day will come when the State of Connecticut grants full legal married status to every couple, every family whose faith community has honored them with the wedding ritual. I urge you to report this legislation favorably, so that day comes soon.

Our state and our country will be made better by your actions today. Thank you.

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