

**Testimony of Beth Kerrigan & Joanne Mock
Judiciary Committee
March 6, 2009**

PLEASE SUPPORT SB 899

It is indeed a pleasure to come before you to continue the discussion of same sex marriage.

My name is Beth Kerrigan, my partner of 15 years is Joanne Mock. Together we are raising our two beautiful energetic seven years old twin sons Fernando and Carlos who attend first grade at Whiting Lane School in West Hartford. Jody has been working for the Hartford insurance company for last 27 years and is involved in several volunteer opportunities including her favorite as the director of the reading/mentoring program within the Hartford school system. I have been selling long term care health insurance for the past 20 years as well as volunteering at Whiting Lane School.

I proudly stand before you as one of the plaintiff couples who are thankful to have been a part of the supreme court case which was successful in winning the right for same sex couples to marry in the state of Connecticut.

During our 15 years as a couple we have celebrated innumerable marriages, among them sisters, nieces, nephews, close friends as well as my parents' 50 and 60 wedding anniversary. While all the time longing in our hearts to have them attend our wedding.

Being able to marry is important to us because it gives us a sense of being part of our community, belonging, it is what two people do who love each other and what to commit to spend their lives together.

So the morning when we got word the decision was going to be announced we discussed not telling our sons if it was not in our favor realizing what a disappointment it would be for them. How could we possibly explain to them why their parents could not share in the tradition of marriage.

Together Jody and I frantically read the decision on the computer, not knowing what the outcome would be, we called GLAD who confirmed we had won. Immediately we embraced and cried ecstatic that finally our family had gained the recognition, the status that all the families we knew enjoyed.

We were also relieved not to have to explain to our boys why their parents who love and commit their lives to their well-being and happiness couldn't be married.

We walked into the front office of Whiting Lane School to pick up the boys and share the good news with them. The staff including the principal showered us with heart-felt

congratulations. The boys were overjoyed and asked if they were going to go get dressed in their “ wedding suits” thinking the wedding was that day.

We headed to Hartford to celebrate.

When asked after the days’ events if we needed our parking lot ticket validated, I had responded we had just been validated, the supreme court said we were equal and deserving of the right to marry.

Words cannot express the overwhelming feelings of gratitude and joy we felt the day we witnessed Judge Silbert signing his name to a document that would allow Jody and I to join in marriage for the first time in our lives.

Later that day our boys accompanied us to West Hartford Town Hall to apply for our marriage license. A day we will never ever forget. We are both proud and thankful to live in the state of Connecticut where equality also lives.

As a committed same sex couple raising children, we urge the legislature to support this bill in order to tie together the loose ends remaining from the decision supreme court decision. Thank you.