



THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD NOT ALLOW OFFICIALS TO REFUSE TO ISSUE MARRIAGE LICENSES

Freedom of religion is a fundamental American value. It means that we are all free to believe or not as we see fit, but it does not mean that government employees can use their religion as a justification for denying the rights of others, including the right to obtain a marriage license. Nor does it mean government employees have the right to impose their personal religious beliefs on those whom they serve.

ALL OF OUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS DESERVE TO LIVE WITH DIGNITY AND BE TREATED FAIRLY AND EQUALLY. Allowing clerks to deny marriage licenses misuses religious freedom to sanction discrimination against couples who want to get married and spend their lives together.

GOVERNMENT CLERKS HAVE TAKEN AN OATH TO CARRY OUT THE DUTIES OF THEIR OFFICE. If providing marriage licenses is a part of those duties, they should be expected and required to provide licenses to all couples who are eligible to marry. Clerks should not be allowed to pick and choose which of their duties they will fulfill or which services they will provide and to whom.

CONSTITUTIONAL VIOLATION: Indeed, allowing clerks to deny licenses to same sex couples violates the U.S. Constitution. A federal court in Kentucky recently determined withholding marriage licenses from same-sex couples based on religious objections violates both the First and Fourteenth Amendments.

NO ONE SHOULD BE DENIED SERVICES THAT THEIR OWN TAX DOLLARS FUND. LGBT Americans pay taxes and serve our country in the military. They are our friends and our neighbors. They deserve to be treated with respect and to be provided government services just like anyone else.

WIDESPREAD CONSEQUENCES: If clerks were allowed to discriminate against couples based on a religious objection, the consequences could affect many types of couples. **Clerks could try to refuse to provide licenses because they don't approve of marriage for couples who are interfaith, interracial, same sex, or divorcees.**
