



## **National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund deeply disappointed by the passage of California's Proposition 8**

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Out in America

**The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund is deeply saddened and disappointed by the passage of California's Proposition 8, which will amend the state Constitution to eliminate the right to marry for same-sex couples.**

### **Statement by Rea Carey, Executive Director National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund**

"This close vote is heartbreaking. Opponents of Prop. 8 - the Equality for All coalition - built an impressive and unprecedented campaign to defeat the measure. In the end, the scare tactics and lies of the other side won out this time. Because of this unjust and disappointing outcome, tens of thousands of loving, committed couples and their families will now have to wait longer to be treated fairly under the law. Eliminating fundamental rights is profoundly wrong, plain and simple.

"With so many other bright spots and celebrations coming out of this election - especially the history-changing election of President-elect Barack Obama, which promises to be the most LGBT-friendly administration ever - it is particularly painful to have this and the other ballot measure losses in Florida, Arizona, Arkansas, and the anti-LGBT measure in Hamtramck, Mich. The anger of many in our community is intense and palpable but somehow we will all need to dig deep and channel our anger and sadness into fulfilling the promise of marriage equality across the country. We will get there.

"Despite this setback in California, we have seen an unprecedented positive shift in public attitudes toward the freedom to marry in California - from 38 percent in our favor during the 2000 vote to 48 percent this election. Public opinion is steadily moving in our favor, and in time, with continued work and renewed investment, fairness and equality will ultimately prevail.

"Indeed, millions of Californians voted against Prop. 8 and tens of thousands of volunteers gave up their evenings and weekends to canvass their communities or participate in No on 8 phone banks. From grandparents to college students to everyone in-between, Californians worked passionately and tirelessly for fairness. Prop. 8 passed as one of the ugliest anti-gay campaigns in our nation's history. This era of divisiveness must end. But the progress being made cannot be disputed, and one day, in the not-too-distant future, we know that fairness will win out.

"We are proud to have been part of Equality for All and salute all of our partners for the incredible efforts and we thank the millions of Californians who did stand for fairness and voted against Prop. 8."

Unprecedented campaign launched

In the effort to defeat Prop. 8, the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community

came together like never before to build an unprecedented campaign that changed hearts and minds of California voters. In foreseeing this attack, Equality for All was launched almost four years ago to defeat any possible anti-LGBT ballot measure against the freedom to marry. Today, the organizational members of Equality for All include the Task Force, Equality California, National Center for Lesbian Rights, L.A. Gay and Lesbian Center, Human Rights Campaign, the ACLU of Northern California, ACLU Gay and Lesbian Rights Project, GLAAD, San Diego LGBT Community Center, Bienestar, the Office of David Bohnett, API Equality and Planned Parenthood of California. Together, the campaign has built the most robust volunteer-driven operation ever in an LGBT initiative fight.

The field operation alone, under the leadership of Task Force staff, had more than 85 organizers employed statewide, enlisted more than 49,500 volunteers and identified more than 130,000 new supporters of the freedom to marry - which will benefit the ongoing fight for the freedom to marry in California. This, combined with the millions of Californians who cast their votes against eliminating the freedom to marry, will prove invaluable as we continue to pursue the freedom to marry in California.