



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 29, 2012

Statement by Bernard Cherkasov, CEO of Equality Illinois, the state's oldest, largest and most effective LGBT advocacy organization, on President Obama's support of the Illinois Religious Freedom and Marriage Fairness Act:

President Obama made it clear today that Illinois should join the ever-building national consensus for marriage equality.

While we knew of his support for the freedom to marry, the fact that the President wants his home state to achieve it through legislative action is a strong and significant statement to our General Assembly that the time is now to act.

Just today, same-sex couples in Maine were allowed to marry for the first time, the result of one of three Election Day referendums supporting the right of all loving, committed couples to spend their lives together in marriage. Marriage equality already went into effect in Washington state, and it starts in Maryland on New Year's Day. With the President's statement, Illinois lawmakers should fully understand that voting for the freedom to marry puts them on the right side of history.

We appreciate the President's call to action in the Illinois General Assembly as lawmakers prepare to return to Springfield in the days ahead. President Obama faced no political repercussions from his support of marriage for gays and lesbians, and neither should members of the Illinois House and Senate.

Equality Illinois expects the state's lawmakers to look to the future, as has President Obama, and vote for marriage equality.

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