



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE / JACL

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JACL TO CONTINUE TO PRESS FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY

San Francisco, CA - Following Tuesday's election, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) expressed concern over ballot initiatives in several states that denied equal rights to gays and lesbians.

California's Proposition 8, Arizona's Proposition 102 and Florida's Amendment 2, all passed by the voters, denied to gays and lesbians the right to marriage equality. In Arkansas, voters also prohibited gay couples from adopting children by passing Initiative 1.

"The United States Constitution provides for equal treatment under the law to all of our citizens," stated National JACL President Larry Oda. "No one group should be singled out for discrimination. We have not forgotten that as Asian Americans, we, too, were once the victims of marriage discrimination in this country. Racism was the motivating factor back then, and it is incumbent upon us to be vigilant and not allow homophobia to guide our laws today."

The JACL, in 1994, was one of the first civil rights groups in the nation to affirm its support for marriage equality. The organization stated in a resolution that marriage equality "was a constitutional right that should not be denied because of a person's sexual orientation."

Lawsuits have been filed by the ACLU and the San Francisco City Attorney's Office to block the implementation of Proposition 8 in California.

"We are deeply troubled by these initiatives, yet our resolve remains steadfast," commented Ron Katsuyama, JACL Vice President for Public Affairs. "The JACL will explore what we can do to support these legal challenges. Who one chooses to love and marry should be an individual and personal choice, not one limited by illegal and discriminatory laws."

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