

## National Asian Pacific American Bar Association

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **NAPABA APPLAUDS SAME-SEX MARRIAGE VICTORY IN CALIFORNIA**

Washington, DC – NAPABA applauds the California Supreme Court’s decision that same-sex couples cannot be denied the fundamental right to marry. Striking down a California law defining marriage as between a man and a woman, the 4-3 Court ruled: “In light of the fundamental nature of the substantive rights embodied in the right to marry – and their central importance to an individual’s opportunity to live a happy, meaningful, and satisfying life as a full member of society – the California Constitution properly must be interpreted to guarantee this basic civil right to all individuals and couples, without regard to their sexual orientation.”

NAPABA and six NAPABA affiliates (Asian Pacific American Bar Association - Los Angeles, Southern California Chinese Lawyers Association, Japanese American Bar Association of Greater Los Angeles, Korean American Bar Association of Southern California, Pan Asian Lawyers of San Diego, and South Asian Bar Association of Southern California) were among the 60 local, state, and national Asian Pacific American (APA) organizations who filed a brief as amici supporting equal marriage rights for gay and lesbian couples.

The brief drew parallels between California’s same-sex marriage ban and past anti-miscegenation laws denying APAs equal access to the fundamental right to marry. Its co-author, Kevin Fong, NAPABA member and partner at Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP, celebrated the Court’s decision: “The Court’s decision persuasively recognizes the fundamental importance of marriage and the constitutional mandate of equality. At the core is the recognition by the Court that ‘Society is served by the institution of marriage in many ways.’ The Court notes the unique role of marriage and family in serving ‘society’s interest by perpetuating the social and political culture and providing continuing support for society over generations.’” Mr. Fong also serves as one of NAPABA’s Amicus Committee co-chairs.

NAPABA President Helen B. Kim added: “Equal access to the fundamental right to marry is a civil rights issue and it was important for NAPABA, the national voice for APAs in legal profession, to be engaged on this issue.”

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*The National Asian Pacific American Bar Association (NAPABA) is the national association of Asian Pacific American attorneys, judges, law professors and law students. NAPABA represents the interests of over 40,000 attorneys and approximately 55 local Asian Pacific American bar associations. Its members represent solo practitioners, large firm lawyers, corporate counsel, legal service and non-profit attorneys, and lawyers serving at all levels of government. NAPABA continues to be a leader in addressing civil rights issues confronting Asian Pacific American communities. Through its national network of committees and affiliates, NAPABA provides a strong voice for increased diversity of federal and state judiciaries, advocates for equal opportunity in the workplace, works to eliminate hate crimes and anti-immigrant sentiment, and promotes professional development of minorities in the legal profession.*