

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE ELEVENTH JUDICIAL CIRCUIT
IN AND FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY, FLORIDA

CATHERINA PARETO and KARLA ARGUELLO;
JUAN CARLOS RODRIGUEZ and DAVID PRICE;
VANESSA ALENIER and MELANIE ALENIER;
TODD DELMAY and JEFFREY DELMAY;
SUMMER GREENE and PAMELA FAERBER; DON
PRICE JOHNSTON and JORGE DIAZ; and
EQUALITY FLORIDA INSTITUTE, INC.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

CASE NO. 2014-1661-CA-01

HARVEY RUVIN, as Clerk of the Courts of Miami-
Dade County, Florida, in his official capacity,

Defendant.

**DECLARATION OF JOHN STEMBERGER IN SUPPORT OF AMICI CURIAE
FLORIDA FAMILY ACTION, INC., and others**

I, John Stemberger, do hereby declare as follows:

1. I am over the age of 18 and am submitting this Declaration in support of the memorandum of Amici Florida Family Action, Inc. ("FFAI"), Florida Democratic League, Inc. ("FDL"), and People United to Lead the Struggle for Equality, Inc. ("PULSE") in opposition to Plaintiffs' Motion for Summary Judgment. The statements in this Declaration are true and correct, and if called upon to testify to them I would and could do so competently.

2. I am the President of FFAI, and I am personally familiar with its organization, objectives, goals, activities, and membership. I also served as the Chairman of Florida4Marriage.org and Yes2Marriage.org ("Y2M") during the 2008 campaign for Amendment 2. Y2M was a Political Committee under Florida law which officially sponsored

and promoted Amendment 2 in the 2008 general election, which has become Article I, Section 27 of the Florida Constitution, also known as the Florida Marriage Protection Act.

3. I have personal knowledge of the issues and events surrounding the birth, development, and campaign behind Amendment 2, including the motivation and purpose behind the four-year effort it took to collect the hundreds of thousands of signatures needed to get it on the ballot, and the campaign which lead to its passage.

4. With Amendment 2, Y2M sought to create the first phase of a serious and thoughtful marriage movement in Florida, with the end goal of strengthening marriages and then reducing the divorce rate in Florida. The campaign was launched in recognition of the overwhelming statistical evidence that children who are given the opportunity to grow up under the direct and consistent daily influence of both a mother and father develop and mature into the most successful adults and productive members of society. Much of the campaign messaging stressed the enormous body of peer-reviewed research published in refereed journals which concludes that children raised by both a mother and a father are stronger in virtually every category of human flourishing, and that the absence of a father or a mother consistently results in higher social maladies of various types. These themes were replete in hundreds of campaign speeches, written materials, and radio and TV ads.

5. Plaintiffs claim and insinuate in this litigation that Y2M and all of the proponents of Amendment 2 were motivated solely by animus and discrimination towards homosexuals. In reality, Amendment 2 was drafted, sponsored, and advocated for by Y2M and its allies for entirely different reasons.

6. As Chairman of Y2M and President of one of the principal advocates for the passage of Amendment 2, I can personally attest that the motivation of its proponents was decidedly **not** animus or discrimination. The goal and purpose of Y2M and its allies was a

sincere desire to strengthen families and foster public policies which give the best possible opportunity for children to be reared by both a mother and a father. This was the primary justification for advocating for Amendment 2. The belief that mothers and fathers bring unique contributions to a child's upbringing was central to all the public and private messaging of the campaign. Y2M and the other proponents of Amendment 2 were motivated by the belief that every child in the State of Florida deserves the best chance to be raised and nurtured by one mother and one father and that Florida's law and constitution should affirm and encourage those relationships. This belief is supported by common sense, history, and countless social science studies.

7. Plaintiffs claim without any proof that Amendment 2 was fueled by nothing more than a desire to force homosexuals back into the closet, and that it was entirely motivated to vilify and demonize homosexuals. This fanciful notion ignores both reality and common sense. As the principal spokesman and proponent of Amendment 2, I had countless encounters with numerous individuals from all sides of the ideological spectrum and all races and ethnic backgrounds who supported Amendment 2 because of the desire to facilitate and encourage the optimal environment for rearing children.

8. During 2008, the same period when Amendment 2 was being hotly debated and considered by the voters of Florida, I spent much of my time advocating for its passage, but also made great sacrifices to show love and concern for all people, including homosexuals. During that same year, my family had the privilege of welcoming an openly gay-identified man, who had AIDS, into my home so my wife and I could care for him and help him recover after a surgical procedure. Our friend had no other place to go, had no other friends to turn to, and needed a place to rest and recover after undergoing aggressive medical treatment and a surgical procedure. My wife, my children, and I welcomed this homosexual man into our home, cared

for him, assisted him with his significant medical needs, and showed him love and respect. The notion that I and others who supported Amendment 2 harbored ill will or discrimination toward homosexuals is not only false, it is frankly offensive.

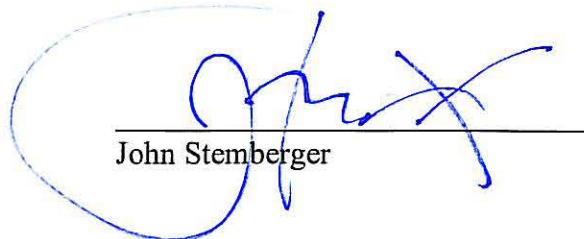
9. Both my wife and I have had openly homosexual persons in our extended families and we have welcomed them into our home, entertained them, loved them and treated them with the same dignity and respect as we would any other family member -- or any other human being.

10. In February of 2009, only months after the passage of Amendment 2, I along with other organizations who sponsored the amendment launched the second phase of our effort called "Strong Marriages Florida" at a major press event in the Capitol Press Center in Tallahassee. The stated purpose of this cultural campaign was to strengthen marriages and reduce Florida's divorce rate by promoting lay "marriage mentors" and creating "community marriage initiatives" across Florida. This campaign continues to this day.

11. Neither I, nor the people I worked with to promote Amendment 2, harbored any animus, ill will or discriminatory intent toward homosexuals. Amendment 2 is therefore not the product of animus, hate, or discrimination. Anyone claiming otherwise is either misinformed or untruthful.

Under penalties of perjury, I declare that I have read the foregoing document and that the facts stated in it are true.

Dated: June 17, 2014



John Stemberger

Notarization not required pursuant to Fl. Stat. § 92.525.