



Mayor Richard Bloom

for State Assembly 2012

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Santa Monica joins Amicus Brief in important DOMA challenge

July 15, 2012, Santa Monica, CA - The City of Santa Monica has joined the amicus brief in the landmark case *Golinski v. Office of Personnel Management*, filed by Lambda Legal. Lambda asked Santa Monica Mayor Bloom to seek his city's help and Bloom readily agreed. The case is pending before the Ninth Circuit and concerns a constitutional challenge to the federal Defense of Marriage Act by Plaintiff Karen Golinski, a federal government employee who was denied spousal health benefits by her employer.

Bloom stated, "Lending our support to this challenge was the right thing to do. I have always believed in equal rights for same sex couples and I am proud that my community has long shown its willingness to stand up on this issue, too." Earlier this year Bloom joined with Mayors from across the nation on the Freedom to Marry Campaign to advocate for marriage equality and was the author of Santa Monica's "Equal Benefits" ordinance. The ordinance requires any employer doing business with the City of Santa Monica to provide the same benefits to same sex couples as it does opposite sex couples.

Added Bloom, "It has been a positive year for the LGBT rights movement, but there is so much more work to be done. The LGBT community knows that they have my steadfast support."

Earlier last week, when Lambda approached Mayor Bloom with its request Bloom immediately urged the City to do so. The City Attorney was able to take quick action due to Santa Monica's longstanding policies supporting equal rights. The amicus brief was filed on behalf of a coalition of public and private employers and makes the point that under DOMA legally married same-sex couples are not recognized as married for purposes of federal laws and programs. Therefore, California employers must bear costs and administrative burdens imposed by the dual treatment of married persons, administer two sets of benefit policies, discriminate among their own employees in benefits provided, and bear the burden of explaining to employees why some are discriminated against.

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About Lambda Legal: Founded in 1973, Lambda Legal is the oldest and largest national legal organization whose mission is to safeguard and advance the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education and policy work.

About Richard Bloom: Santa Monica Mayor Richard Bloom is running for the State Assembly in order to restore California to a national place of leadership in innovation, education, job creation, environmentalism and social justice. An acclaimed civic leader, Richard has also operated his own business as a family law attorney for over 30 years. Skilled at creating a dialogue between fractious parties and achieving consensus agreements, he has served as a Family Law Settlement Officer and a mediator for the Los Angeles Superior Court. As Councilmember and Mayor of Santa Monica, he has effectively promoted the economic vitality of the City, helping to guide and sustain Santa Monica even in current times of national and worldwide downturn, and has protected the health of children and the elderly, providing affordable housing and restoring the environment to the benefit of all. For over a decade, Bloom has successfully championed the cause of excellence in our public schools. As a California Coastal Commissioner, Chair of the Santa Monica Bay Restoration Commission, Chair of the Westside Cities Council of Governments, and board member of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, Richard has represented every corner of the Assembly district by protecting our irreplaceable environment, helping to find agreement on regional transportation projects and providing leadership on a range of other important issues.