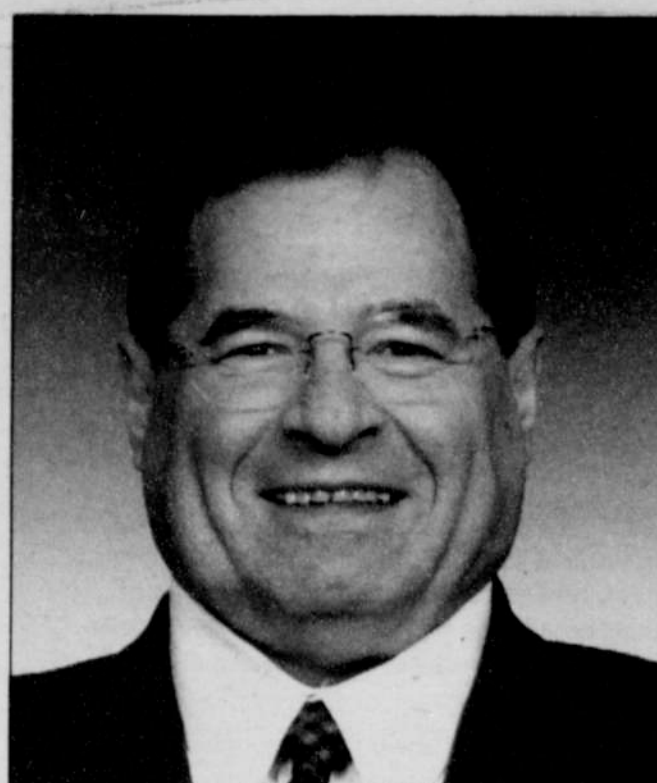




**U.S. Rep. Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., addressed a crowd about the Uniting American Families Act, which would give queers the right to sponsor their foreign-national partners for green cards.**

was resolved. This means the register stopped accepting marriage applications from gay couples until the Iowa Supreme Court ruled on the county's appeal.

Republican House Minority Leader Christopher Rants said the ruling indicated a need for a federal ban on same-sex marriage.

Dennis Johnson, a lawyer for the six gay couples who sued after being denied marriage licenses in 2005, said Iowa has a long history of protecting civil rights in cases of race and gender.

## NEW JERSEY Voters Ready for Marriage

As New Jersey marked the six-month anniversary of its civil unions law Aug. 19, a new statewide Zogby Poll showed majorities of voters favoring changing the law to full marriage equality for same-sex couples. The poll of 803 New Jersey voters was taken from Aug. 8 to 10.

As of Aug. 16, 1,514 couples have entered into civil unions in New Jersey. Garden State Equality alone has heard from 242 couples reporting that their employers are not recognizing their civil unions.

The poll asked, "If public officials in New Jersey come to the conclusion that civil unions for gay couples have not worked to provide equality under the law, and that the way to fix the law is to give gay couples the same right to marry as heterosexual couples, would you be fine with that or would you be upset by that?" About 63 percent responded "fine with that," while only 31 percent responded "upset by that."

The poll also provided key political information to legislators about when they consider changing civil unions to marriage.

The poll asked, "Which of the following do you think is most likely to happen to legislators if they were to allow gay couples to marry: those legislators would not be re-elected, or nothing because people care about other issues more?" About 72 percent said nothing would happen to legislators, while only 21 percent said legislators would not be re-elected.

"Regardless of whether any public official supports marriage equality or wants to maintain the state's failed civil unions law," said Steven Goldstein, chairman of Garden State Equality, "no

official in New Jersey can credibly say that marriage for gay couples is a divisive issue in the state."

For more information visit [www.gardenstateequality.org](http://www.gardenstateequality.org).

## NEW YORK Congressman Backs Gay Immigration Rights

An overflow crowd hung on U.S. Rep. Jerrold Nadler's every word at a forum Aug. 28 co-hosted by Immigration Equality and the Human Rights Campaign. The New York Democrat joined panelists from the Mexican American Legal Defense Fund, Asian American Justice Center and Gay Men's Health Crisis to discuss immigration issues affecting the queer and HIV-positive communities.

More than 200 people crammed an auditorium at New York's LGBT Community Center to discuss the Uniting American Families Act, pending federal legislation that would give gays and lesbians the right to sponsor their foreign-national partners for green cards. Nadler, the lead House sponsor of the bill, projected a growth in support for the act, citing 84 co-sponsors in the House.

In addition to immigration law, the panelists discussed the HIV immigration ban, the future of comprehensive immigration reform and what it means for the sexual minorities community, and the recent death in immigration detention of Victoria Arellano, a transgender woman who was denied HIV medication.

The forum included a lengthy discussion on the HIV ban and its negative impact on gay people and the immigrant community as a whole. "Since 1987, the HIV entry ban has imperiled every HIV-positive immigrant and traveler to the United States," said Nancy Ordovery, assistant director for research and federal affairs at Gay Men's Health Crisis. "It is indefensible—born of fear and ignorance and discrimination. Twenty years is long enough."

## OKLAHOMA Gay Adoptive Parents Gain Rights

A federal appeals court in Denver struck down Oklahoma's law that bans state recognition of out-of-state adoptions by same-sex parents Aug. 3.

No other state has a similar law, according to attorney Kenneth Upton of Lambda Legal. "This was the most extreme example of punishing children because you don't approve of their parents."

He said the law punished children because it legally orphaned them.

What gay rights advocates viewed as a victory was a defeat to the Oklahoma Department of Health, which sought to uphold the law.

"We hold that final adoption orders by a state court of competent jurisdiction are judgments that must be given full faith and credit under the Constitution by every other state in the nation," the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals concluded in a 35-page decision. "Because the Oklahoma statute at issue categorically rejects a class of out-of-state adoption decrees, it violates the Full Faith and Credit Clause" of the U.S. Constitution, the judges wrote.

A top lawyer for the health department, Thomas Cross, said agency officials have not seen the decision and therefore could not yet comment on it. 10

Compiled by JAYMEE R. CUTI

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