

Mike Huckabee Calls for 'Resistance' to Legalizing Gay Marriage

Former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee, a likely contender for the 2016 GOP presidential nomination and a leading voice for Christian conservatives, said Thursday (Jan. 22) that governors and state legislators should consider ways to resist a Supreme Court decision that recognized same-sex marriage as a constitutional right.

Huckabee likened such a ruling to the notorious Dred Scott case before the Civil War in which the Supreme Court said African-Americans couldn't be citizens. Pushing back against such an opinion "is not without historical and judicial precedence," he said in an interview promoting his new book, *God, Guns, Grits, and Gravy*, published Wednesday (Jan. 21) by St. Martin's Press.

"We have a constitutional amendment in our constitution," he said on *USA Today's* Capital Download. "Do we want to hold to that? Do we want to put it before a referendum of the people?' I mean, there are a lot of different angles to pursue it. (Or) you could just surrender and say, 'OK, we just agree that the court is right.' "

Whatever the legal basis for Huckabee's stance – and constitutional scholars question whether there is one – as a political matter his fervent opposition all but guarantees that the issue of gay marriage will be prominent in the GOP presidential debate. While other leading contenders also oppose gay marriage, some of them, including New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, have said court decisions recognizing the right make it a settled question.

Huckabee disagrees.

“Rather than just immediately capitulate to nine people in robes, and what it will probably be is five people in robes against four people who disagree ... then you have a very, very divided court,” he told the weekly newsmaker series. “Do we really surrender the entire American system of government to five people, unelected, appointed for life, with no consequences for the decisions they make? The founders never intended for there to be such incredible, almost unlimited power, put in the hands of so few people.”

But Erwin Chemerinsky, dean of the University of California Law School, Irvine, said states would have no options if the Supreme Court decided that laws prohibiting same-sex marriage violated the Constitution.

“There have been efforts by states to circumvent or ignore Supreme Court decisions, most notably the intense Southern resistance to *Brown v. Board of Education* and desegregation,” Chemerinsky said. “The Supreme Court made it clear that its ruling was the law of the land. This will be no different.”

The issue has been joined, he noted. “Already, marriage equality exists in 36 states, mostly because of court decisions, and there has not been the type of resistance Huckabee suggests.”

Still, it is a sign of Huckabee’s appeal to the evangelical Christians who are among the GOP’s most loyal voters that his new book immediately shot to No. 1 in sales among political books on Amazon and into the top 100 among books of all sorts. In his folksy, conversational style, he unfavorably contrasts New York, Los Angeles and Washington, D.C. – places he dubs “Bubble-ville” – with those from the heartland, which he dubs “Bubba-ville.”

At one point in the book, he discussed how “goood” it is to eat game. “I’m sorry if that sounds cruel to any vegan readers,” he added. “(And are there any? Raise your hands, if

you have the strength.)”

In the interview, Huckabee also:

- * Acknowledged he was likely to make his second bid for the White House. He also ran in 2008. “If everything continues to work well and I sense that there is, say, the proper financial and political support, then I think it’s a given that that’s where the destination is.”

- * Predicted former president Bill Clinton would be an asset to his wife, Hillary Rodham Clinton, if she runs for the Democratic nomination. “I mean, he had a good presidency. I’m a Republican but I admire good governing.”

- * Dismissed as overblown a furor over comments in his new book criticizing Beyonce and Jay-Z for using sexually explicit lyrics, and the president and first lady for allowing their daughters to listen to them. “I do think they’re good parents,” he said of the Obamas, adding he has some of Beyonce’s songs on his iPhone.