

Louisiana Resists Temptation to Bless Gay Marriage

A federal district court judge in New Orleans upheld a Louisiana ban on **gay marriage** on Wednesday, in a break from a string of recent rulings against such bans in other states following a key U.S. Supreme Court ruling.

The decision is the first by a federal judge to uphold a state **gay marriage ban** since the nation's top court last year struck down a federal benefits law that restricted the definition of marriage to heterosexual couples.

"Louisiana's decision to neither permit nor recognize **same-sex marriage**, formed in the arena of the democratic process, is supported by a rational basis," Judge Martin Feldman wrote.

Since the June 2013 Supreme Court ruling in the *United States v. Windsor* case, nearly 30 federal and state courts have ruled against bans on same-sex marriage at the state level. Although one state judge in Tennessee upheld a ban, no federal judges had done so until Wednesday.

In the wake of recent lower court rulings that have struck down state bans on gay marriage, the **Supreme Court** is expected to take up at least one case on the issue during its next term, which starts in October.

Reporting by Jonathan Kaminsky in New Orleans and Lawrence Hurley in Washington; editing by Susan Heavey

© 2014 Thomson Reuters. All rights reserved.