

Mike Huckabee, Rick Santorum Storm Capitol With Marriage Supporters

Several hundred traditional marriage supporters marched to the U.S. Supreme Court on Thursday after former Republican presidential candidates Rick Santorum and Mike Huckabee urged them to keep fighting to keep marriage defined as being between a man and a woman.

Coming after a flurry of federal court rulings striking down same-sex marriage bans in a number of states, including Wisconsin on June 6, the speakers at the second annual "March for Marriage," sought to make it clear their movement was not losing steam.

"This is the second year we're doing this, but it won't be the last," said Democratic New York state Senator Ruben Diaz, who brought busloads of Latino New Yorkers to the march sponsored by the conservative National Organization for Marriage. "We're not going to tire."

Not including Wisconsin, same-sex marriage is now legal in 19 states plus the District of Columbia. That number could jump sharply if federal court rulings striking down bans in several states are upheld on appeal.

Last June, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a federal law defining marriage as between a man and a woman for purposes of federal benefits. Emboldened by that decision, gay and lesbian couples have launched at least 70 lawsuits calling for a broader right.

One woman attending the rally, Guatemala-born Ana Stachmus of Altoona, Pennsylvania, said she believes the gay marriage movement is centered in the courts and legislatures because

lawmakers are afraid of asking the people to vote.

Speakers including Santorum, Huckabee and San Francisco Catholic Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone demanded that the public have more of a say on the issue than judges and politicians.

People attending the rally later walked quietly to the Supreme Court and sang a prayer song before the marble steps.

Santorum urged those at the rally not to “hate” those who support gay marriage, and to act “with respect for all people.”

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