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RELIGIOUS LEADERS, FAITH ORGANIZATIONS FILE LAWSUIT TO INVALIDATE PROP 8

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – Today, the California Council of Churches and other religious leaders and faith organizations representing millions of members filed a petition with the California Supreme Court asking the Court to invalidate Proposition 8. The petition argues that Proposition 8 poses a severe threat to the guarantee of equal protection for all and was not enacted through the constitutionally required process for such a dramatic change to the California Constitution.

The petition is filed on behalf of the California Council of Churches, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ, two Episcopal Bishops (of California and Los Angeles), the Progressive Jewish Alliance, the Unitarian Universalist Association of Congregations and the Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of California, and the Northern and Southern California Nevada Conferences of the United Church of Christ. The groups are represented by Eric Isaacson, based in San Diego, and by Jon B. Eisenberg of Eisenberg and Hancock, LLP, based in Oakland.

“Proposition 8 poses a grave threat to religious freedom,” said Rev. Rick Schlosser, Executive Director of the California Council of Churches. “If the Court permits gay men and lesbians to be deprived of equal protection by a simple majority vote, religious minorities could be denied equal protection as well—a terrible irony in a nation founded by people who emigrated to escape religious persecution. If the Court permits Proposition 8 to take effect, religious discrimination similarly could be written into California’s Constitution.”

“The United Church of Christ is honored to join other religious bodies in this challenge to Proposition 8,” said the Rev. John H. Thomas, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. “We believe our communities are strengthened and our religious freedoms protected by ensuring that the principle of equal protection applies to all Californians. Religious groups know from long experience the dangers posed by placing unchecked power in the hands of temporary majorities.”

For a copy of the brief visit <http://www.calchurches.org/marriage/>

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