



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 7, 2009

Contact:

Lea Gilmore, Program Director

lea@marylandbfa.org

443-824-0272

LEADERS OF THE MARYLAND BLACK FAMILY ALLIANCE (MBFA) APPLAUDS RECENT DECISIONS FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY ACROSS THE COUNTRY.

HONORARY MEMBERS

JULIAN BOND
LAURA MURPHY
JOYCE J. SCOTT

FOUNDING MEMBERS

SENATOR GWENDOLYN BRITT
DELEGATE TAWANNA GAINES
MONTGOMERY COUNTY
EXECUTIVE IKE LEGGETT
DELEGATE JOSELINE
PENNA-MELNYK
DELEGATE CRAIG RICE

TCHAD DUBLIN
ADRIAN DENNIS
O. ABIOLA AKINTOLA
TIANA ALLAN
ALLEN BENNETT
DR. PAMELA BENNETT
DR. LACARTIA BEST
ERIC BRYANT
HELEN BRYANT
REV. LARRY BRUMFIELD
TITO CASTROL
MARVIN "DOC" CHEATHAM
RUFUS CLANZY
ROBERTA COATES
REV. JOHN CRESTWELL
RYAN DEAN
NIAMI MURRAY
FREEMAN FORD DENNIS, JR.
RION DENNIS
JUNE WHITE DILLARD
JUDY DOCCA
BRANDON DULA
VALERIE ERVIN
REV. DAVID T. GILMORE
LEA A. GILMORE
WILLIE HARRIS
JULIAN JACKSON
DR. Q.T. JACKSON
CARL LASHLEY
ALLAN LEEKS
KENNETH LEEKS
DR. SOBHAN A. MATHEW
FRED MASON, JR.
FRED MASON, III
JAMES MORRISON
ROSE MARY MORRISON
ODEANA R. NEAL
TONY PEREZ
ROZ PELLER
MICHAEL PRESSOIR
TUBI RETTA
DR. GARY RODWELL
AKESHA L. SCOTT
BONNITA SPIKES
LISA SWABY-ROWE
DR. ARTIE TRAVIS
BERNICE TUCKER
AND GROWING

ELBRIDGE JAMES, DIRECTOR
LEA GILMORE, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

**MARYLAND BLACK
FAMILY ALLIANCE**
PO BOX 10952
ROCKVILLE * MD * 20859
WWW.MBFA.ORG
FOR MORE INFORMATION
lea@marylandbfa.org

The Maryland Black Family Alliance is pleased to announce that yesterday Maine's Governor John Baldacci signed into law a marriage equality bill overwhelmingly approved by the Senate and House. Maine now joins Iowa, Vermont, Massachusetts, and Connecticut in ending the exclusion of gay couples from marriage.

This week in a 12-1 vote, Washington, D.C. voted to legally recognize same-sex marriages performed in other jurisdictions. Unfortunately, the one vote against equality was Councilman Marion Barry. "It is exceptionally unfortunate when a champion of the Civil Rights Movement refuses to apply the principles of justice to all," states MBFA Program Director Lea Gilmore. "It is the LGBT communities of color that suffer most when legal protections are not applied. The MBFA stands with Coretta Scott-King, Julian Bond, Rev. Joseph Lowery, Congressman John Lewis and many others who believe in liberty and justice for all," she continued.

MBFA is an alliance of elected officials, activists, social workers, professors, artists, historians, mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers -- Black straight allies, leading the discourse in Maryland's African American communities and beyond centering on the concept of fairness for same-sex couples and their families; as well as poverty, violence, HIV/AIDS and other issues that impact Maryland's Black LGBT population. The MBFA emphasizes the idea that recognition of same-sex relationships furthers the social and economic welfare of Black families generally.

As African Americans, we know that discrimination is wrong and that it damages us all when we exclude any group of Americans from the protections that other Americans enjoy. Therefore, with an integrity inspired by our past, we seek fairness, justice and equality for all Maryland families.

Elbridge James, MBFA Director ebridge@marylandbfa.org