

Gay marriage ban falls in Nevada

By Dan Levine, Reuters

SAN FRANCISCO — Legal momentum for extending U.S. marriage rights to same-sex couples accelerated on Tuesday as a federal appeals court in San Francisco struck down bans on gay matrimony in Idaho and Nevada a day after the U.S. Supreme Court let stand similar rulings for five other states.

The 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco ruled the bans in Idaho and Nevada violated the constitution and said they cannot be enforced, adding to a mounting list of states where same-sex unions are now legal.

The ruling binds all states in the court's region including three that do not permit gay marriage, Arizona, Montana and Alaska, putting the United States on track for legalized gay marriage in 35 states.

Legal pressure mounted for further expansion of marriage rights in the wake of Monday's Supreme Court decision that ended bans in five states but left intact 20 others.

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