

MARK LEWIS, et al.,

Plaintiffs-Appellants,

v.

GWENDOLYN L. HARRIS, et al.,

Defendants-Appellees.

SUPREME COURT OF NEW JERSEY

DOCKET NO. 58,389
CIVIL ACTION

**AFFIDAVIT OF
CHRIS LODEWYKS**

State of New Jersey)
 : ss.
County of Passaic)

Chris Lodewyks, having been duly sworn, states as follows:

1. I am one of the Plaintiffs in this lawsuit, and I provide this affidavit in support of the Plaintiffs' Motion in Aid of Litigants' Rights.
2. I am 60 years old, and I am in a permanent committed relationship of 38 years with Craig Hutchison, who has also provided an affidavit in support of Plaintiffs' motion.
3. Craig and I were born and raised in New Jersey, and have lived here all our lives.
4. Craig and I entered a civil union on November 7, 2007. When our attorneys asked us to provide this date, we had to think hard to remember it, because we do not celebrate it. When I went to City Hall to obtain the civil union license, the person at the reception desk did not even know what office I should go to obtain one, or what a civil union was. After I finally found the right office, the person there said that she only handled marriage licenses and that the person who was trained to issue civil union licenses was not there that day. She said that civil unions

are done in a separate book from the marriage license book and that she did not want to look for it. I did not want to delay solemnizing our civil union, and I managed to convince her to look for it and finally got the license. If I had gone to City Hall because I was getting married, I would not have to deal with the confusion and frustration. I would have been treated as if it were a special day for me.

5. As I stated in my earlier affidavit, Craig and I met in 1968, but in 1971 while we were still in college our relationship began in earnest when we went together to a NY Mets / Houston Astros game. We have built a life together in the last 38 years. There have been many family jobs we have taken on as a couple, just like our married friends would. While my mom was battling cancer at the end of her life, I was spending time with her nearly every day, and Craig took time off from work to help out. Before she passed away, I helped Craig's mother with things like taking her to the eye doctor and decorating her house for Christmas.

6. Craig and I grew up in very stable, loving families. From them, we learned the importance of that kind of environment. We lead our lives with the values that were taught to us by our families, and that means in part we need to have the integrity of fully expressing ourselves and our values. We chose to enter a civil union to protect ourselves as well as the law in New Jersey allows for same-sex couples like us, but we would get married if we were allowed to, in order to express these values.

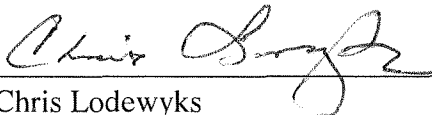
7. I still believe, as I stated in my earlier affidavit, that with marriage, everyone can instantly relate to and understand your relationship. In contrast, people do not understand what "civil union" means. Forms at doctor's offices or other places do not have a box for civil unions. We constantly have to explain to people what it is and that our relationship is as important to us as it would be to a married couple. Two weeks ago, I had to go to a new doctor, and there were no

boxes on the forms for anything other than the standard "heterosexual" categories. I had to check off "single" but then wrote in "civil union" next to it. I also brought up to the receptionist that, because civil unions are the law in New Jersey, their form should include an appropriate box. Her response was, "Oh." I left the office strongly doubting she would bring it up to anyone else.

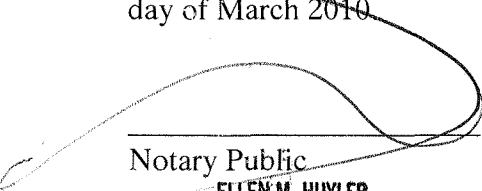
8. We feel that by creating the separate category of "civil union," New Jersey has sent a message that our relationship is not as good as the relationships of married couples. Everyone knows what it takes to be married, like the hard work and commitment involved. But the term civil union simply doesn't have the same currency, and it devalues our relationship to have to describe it that way. Socially, people don't seem to attach much importance to civil unions. They really don't understand what they are, and therefore don't seem even to think about them. Being married, to them, means engagement rings, romance, weddings, receptions, honeymoons, family, etc. The rights are not a thought. So when you bring up a civil union, which is basically a legal contract with the state for rights, it's a big "ho-hum" for most people.

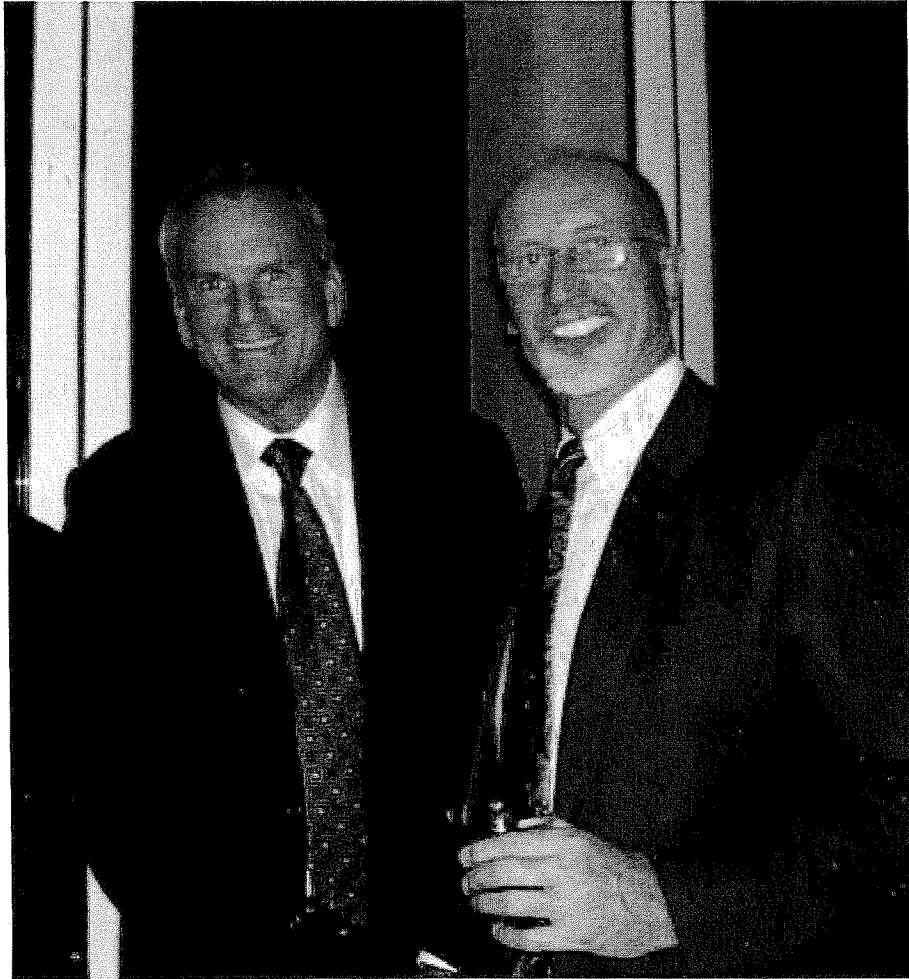
9. Attached to this affidavit is a true and correct copy of a photograph of Craig and me.

10. I hereby declare, under penalties of perjury, that the facts stated in this affidavit are personally known to me, and that they are true.


Chris Lodewyks

Sworn to me this 15th
day of March 2010.


Notary Public
ELLEN M. HUYLER
A Notary Public of New Jersey
My Commission Expires Aug 2, 2011



Chris and Craig