

No. 2014-2184

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**UNITED STATES COURT OF APPEALS  
FOR THE FIRST CIRCUIT**

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ADA MERCEDES CONDE-VIDAL; MARITZA LOPEZ-AVILES; IRIS DELIA RIVERA-RIVERA; JOSE A. TORRUELLAS-IGLESIAS; THOMAS J. ROBINSON; ZULMA OLIVERAS-VEGA; YOLANDA ARROYO-PIZARRO; JOHANNE VELEZ-GARCIA; FAVIOLA MELENDEZ-RODRIGUEZ; PUERTO RICO PARA TOD@S; IVONNE ALVAREZ-VELEZ,

*Plaintiffs-Appellants,*

v.

DR. ANA RIUS-ARMENDARIZ, in her official capacity as Secretary of the Health Department of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; WANDA LLOVET DIAZ, in her official capacity as the Director of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Registrar of Vital Records; ALEJANDRO J. GARCIA-PADILLA, in his official capacity as Governor of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; JUAN C. ZARAGOSA-GOMEZ, in his official capacity as Director of the Treasury in Puerto Rico,

*Defendants-Appellees.*

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On Appeal from the United States District Court for the District of Puerto Rico in  
Case No. 3:14-cv-01253, Judge Juan M. Pérez-Giménez

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**JOINT RESPONSE PURSUANT TO COURT ORDER**

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June 26, 2015

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Pursuant to this Honorable Court's Order of April 14, 2015, the parties have conferred and hereby respectfully propose the following regarding further proceedings in this case:

1. On April 9, 2015, Plaintiffs-Appellants made a request for assignment and asked the Court to schedule oral argument "as soon as possible and, in any event, no later than this Court's July/August 2015 sitting." Request for Assignment, *Conde-Vidal v. Rius-Armendariz*, No. 14-2184 (1st Cir. Apr. 9, 2015). On April 14, 2015, the Court ordered the parties to confer and propose a schedule for further proceedings "within 14 days of the Supreme Court's decision in the same-sex marriage cases, *Obergefell v. Hodges*, No. 14-556, etc." Order, *Conde-Vidal v. Rius-Armendariz*, No. 14-2184 (1st Cir. Apr. 14, 2015).

2. On June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court issued its opinion in *Obergefell*, holding that "the right to marry is a fundamental right inherent in the liberty of the person, and under the Due Process and Equal Protection Clauses of the Fourteenth Amendment couples of the same-sex may not be deprived of that right and that liberty." *See Obergefell v. Hodges*, No. 14-556, slip op. at 22 (June 26, 2015).

3. The Supreme Court's opinion striking down marriage bans in Ohio, Kentucky, Michigan, and Tennessee controls the outcome of this case. The marriage bans considered by the Supreme Court are nearly identical to Puerto Rico's Marriage Ban. Each denies licenses to same-sex couples who wish to

marry, and each denies married same-sex couples any legal recognition of their marriages licensed in other jurisdictions. *Compare, e.g.*, Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 3101.01(C) and Ohio Const. art. XV, § 11 with P.R. Laws Ann. tit. 31, §221.

4. In holding that same-sex couples share equally in the fundamental right to marry and to have their marriages recognized, the Court explicitly overruled *Baker v. Nelson*, 409 U. S. 810 (1972). *Obergefell*, slip op. at 22-23.

5. Having conferred pursuant to this Court's order, Plaintiffs-Appellants and Defendants-Appellees agree that the Supreme Court's decision in *Obergefell* resolves the questions presented by this case. The Supreme Court's determination that barring same-sex couples from marrying and having their marriages recognized violates the Fourteenth Amendment requires a finding that Puerto Rico's Marriage Ban is also unconstitutional, and the parties agree that this Court can resolve this matter promptly without additional submissions or oral argument.

6. The parties respectfully request that this Court issue a decision as soon as possible reversing the District Court's dismissal of this matter, holding Puerto Rico's Marriage Ban unconstitutional, and remanding for entry of judgment for the Plaintiffs-Appellants.

7. Should this Court nonetheless believe it would benefit from hearing oral argument, Plaintiffs-Appellants and Defendants-Appellees respectfully request

that oral argument be scheduled no later than July 2015 to facilitate the prompt disposition of this appeal.

For the foregoing reasons, Plaintiffs-Appellants and Defendants-Appellees respectfully request that the Court promptly hold that Puerto Rico's Marriage Ban is unconstitutional, reverse the District Court's dismissal, expedite issuance of the mandate, and remand the case to the District Court with orders to enter judgment in Plaintiffs-Appellants' favor.

June 26, 2015

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Margarita Mercado- Echegaray  
Margarita Mercado-Echegaray

/s/ Andrés González-Berdecía  
Andrés González Berdecía  
Counsel for Defendants –Appellees

/s/ Ada M. Conde-Vidal  
Ada M. Conde-Vidal  
Counsel for Plaintiff-Appellant  
Ivonne Álvarez Vélez

/s/ José L. Nieto  
José L. Nieto  
Counsel for Plaintiff-Appellant  
Ada M. Conde-Vidal

/s/ Omar Gonzalez-Pagan  
Omar Gonzalez-Pagan  
Counsel for Plaintiffs-Appellees  
Maritza López Avilés and Iris D.  
Rivera Rivera; José A. Torruellas  
Iglesias and Thomas J. Robinson;  
Zulma Oliveras Vega and Yolanda  
Arroyo Pizarro; Johanne Vélez  
García and Faviola Meléndez  
Rodríguez; and Puerto Rico Para  
Tod@s

FELICIA H. ELLSWORTH  
MARK C. FLEMING  
RACHEL I. GURVICH  
WILMER CUTLER PICKERING  
HALE AND DORR LLP  
60 State Street  
Boston, MA 02109  
(617) 526-6000  
Felicia.Ellsworth@wilmerhale.com  
Mark.Fleming@wilmerhale.com  
Rachel.Gurvich@wilmerhale.com

PAUL R.Q. WOLFSON  
WILMER CUTLER PICKERING  
HALE AND DORR LLP  
1875 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20006  
(202) 663-6000  
Paul.Wolfson@wilmerhale.com

ALAN E. SCHOENFELD  
WILMER CUTLER PICKERING  
HALE AND DORR LLP  
7 World Trade Center  
250 Greenwich Street  
New York, NY 10007  
(212) 230-8800  
Alan.Schoenfeld@wilmerhale.com

CELINA ROMANY-SIACA  
CELINA ROMANY LAW OFFICES  
268 Munoz Rivera Avenue, Suite 1500  
San Juan, PR 00918  
(787) 754-9304  
butecelinaromany@gmail.com

OMAR GONZALEZ-PAGAN  
HAYLEY GORENBERG  
KAREN L. LOEWY  
JAELE HUMPHREY-SKOMER  
LAMBDA LEGAL DEFENSE AND  
EDUCATION FUND, INC.  
120 Wall Street, 19th Floor  
New York, NY 10005  
(212) 809-8585  
ogonzalez-pagan@lambdalegal.org  
hgorenberg@lambdalegal.org  
kloewy@lambdalegal.org  
jhumphrey@lambdalegal.org

GARY W. KUBEK  
HARRIET M. ANTCZAK  
JING KANG  
DEBEVOISE & PLIMPTON LLP  
919 Third Avenue  
New York, NY 10022  
(212) 909-6000  
gwkubek@debevoise.com  
hmantcza@debevoise.com  
jkang@debevoise.com

RYAN M. KUSMIN  
DEBEVOISE & PLIMPTON LLP  
555 13th Street N.W.  
Washington, DC 20004  
(202) 383-8000  
rmkusmin@debevoise.com

*Counsel for Plaintiffs-Appellants Maritza López Avilés and Iris D. Rivera Rivera; José A. Torruellas Iglesias and Thomas J. Robinson; Zulma Oliveras Vega and Yolanda Arroyo Pizarro; Johanne Vélez García and Faviola Meléndez Rodríguez; and Puerto Rico Para Tod@s*

ADA M. CONDE VIDAL  
CONDE ATTORNEY AT LAW, PSC  
P.O. Box 13268  
San Juan, PR 00908-3268  
(787) 721-0401  
condelawpr@gmail.com

JOSÉ L. NIETO  
NIETO LAW OFFICES  
District View Plaza, Suite 301  
644 Fernández Juncos Avenue  
San Juan, PR 00907-3122  
(787) 520-6064  
jose\_l\_nieto2000@yahoo.com

*Counsel for Plaintiffs-Appellants Ada M. Conde Vidal and Ivonne Álvarez Vélez*

MARGARITA MERCADO-ECHEGARAY  
SOLICITOR GENERAL  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO  
P.O. Box 9020192  
San Juan, PR 00902-0192  
(787) 724-2165  
marmercado@justicia.pr.gov

ANDRÉS GONZÁLEZ-BERDECÍA  
ASSISTANT SOLICITOR GENERAL  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
COMMONWEALTH OF PUERTO RICO  
P.O. Box 9020192  
San Juan, PR 00902-0192  
(787) 724-2165  
angonzalez@justicia.pr.gov

*Counsel for Defendants-Appellees Dr. Ana Rius-Armendariz, in her official capacity as Secretary of the Health Department of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; Wanda Llovet Diaz, in her official capacity as the Director of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico Registrar of Vital Records; Alejandro J. Garcia-Padilla, in his official capacity as Governor of the Commonwealth Of Puerto Rico; Juan C. Zaragosa-Gomez, in his official capacity as Director of the Treasury in Puerto Rico*

## CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I filed the foregoing Joint Response with the Clerk of the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit via the CM/ECF system this 26th day of June, 2015 to be served on all counsel of record via ECF.

*/s/ Omar Gonzalez-Pagan*

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OMAR GONZALEZ-PAGAN  
LAMBDA LEGAL DEFENSE AND  
EDUCATION FUND, INC.  
120 Wall Street, 19th Floor  
New York, NY 10005  
(212) 809-8585  
ogonzalez-pagan@lambdalegal.org

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