

Iowa judge puts hold on same-sex weddings

by UPI

DES MOINES, Iowa - The judge who ruled that same-sex couples can legally marry in Polk County, Iowa, put a hold on his order Friday. Polk County Recorder Julie Haggerty immediately stopped issuing licenses to same-sex couples, the Des Moines (Iowa) Register reported. The office had issued 21 licenses by 11:30 a.m. Friday, mostly to same-sex couples. District Judge Robert Hanson said Thursday a state law declaring only marriage between males and females is invalid, violates the due process and equal protection clauses of the Iowa Constitution. His ruling came in a 2005 lawsuit brought by six gay and lesbian couples. Hanson ordered the recorder to start applying state marriage rules "in a gender-neutral manner" so same-sex couples can marry. Polk County Attorney John Sarcone said his office intended to appeal Hanson's ruling, which applies only to Polk County. Iowa Gov. Chet Culver said he plans to follow the matter closely so he can determine "whether any additional legislative actions are appropriate or necessary." Two Iowa State University students, Tim McQuillan and Sean Fritz, became the first and now the only gay couple in the state to marry. Officials were unsure if the marriage is valid. The same-sex couples who obtained licenses will probably get letters explaining that they cannot use them, Haggerty said.

Copyright © 2007, by United Press International. All Rights Reserved.

Iowa judge puts hold on same-sex weddings by UPI