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NJ Marriage Equality Bill Fails 20 to 14

By **Marcinho Savant**
savvyplanners.com Staff

(Trenton) After a morning tense with anticipation and anxiety, the gavel dropped commencing the debate on “[The Freedom of Religion and Equality in Civil Marriage Act](#)” (S1967). At three p.m. Senator Loretta Weinberg took the floor.

She began with a reference to her late husband, Irwin Weinberg, saying that her relationship never had to be explained to anyone. It was clearly understood because marital relationships are instantly understood.

“The bill is sponsored by Senators Loretta Weinberg and Raymond Lesniak and co-sponsored by Senators Barbara Buono, Teresa Ruiz, Sandra Cunningham and Nia Gill. If approved by both houses of the legislature and signed by Governor Jon Corzine before noon of next Tuesday, New Jersey would be the sixth state to allow same-sex unions”.¹ Senator Weinberg continued in her opening remarks thanked [Garden State Equality](#) Chairperson, Steven Goldstein, and its membership, on the Senate floor.

Senator Sean T. Kean (R- Monmouth) taking on a, noticeably, more hostile tone, railed on about his resentment of the implication that anyone who disagreed with the bill's proponents was against equality. While, only moments before, having fondly regaled the gentrification benefits produced by gays moving in to neighborhoods “where people didn't want to go.” Senator John Girgenti (D- Passaic) lamented “It seems that nothing is sacred anymore.”

Senator Nia Long (D-Essex), a co-sponsor, stated “There is nothing you can do to tweak civil unions because we have a separate and unequal system.” “We have an obligation under the constitution, legs islatively, quoting Dr. King, “Sometimes a law is just on its face and unjust in its application.”

Quoting [The Federalist Papers \(#51\)](#) Senator Robert M. Gordon (D- Bergen) read: **“It is of great importance in a republic not only to guard the society against the oppression of its rulers, but to guard one part of the society against the injustice of the other part. Different interests necessarily exist in different classes of citizens. If a majority be united by a common interest, the rights of the minority will be insecure.**

Senator Teresa Ruiz (D-Essex) the final, officially scheduled, speaker prior to the voting, saw herself in each of the “others in a list” of the few. She referred to all the ‘types’ of people who would not have had protection had it not been for legislative intervention as opposed to public referendum (women, minorities, et cetera). She said, “I don't ever want to take a vote that says it's OK for me, but not for you.” Still a few others were permitted to speak prior to the vote and roll call.

Senator Sandra Cunningham (D- Hudson), a descendant of slaves, recalled a story about majority rule, hearing how “God wanted us to be in slavery and God put the white masters there to protect them”. She continued, “As an African-American, I cannot in good conscience not support anyone's right to be treated with dignity and respect. All of us have the right to dignity, love and respect.” When speaking about the responsibility of the body she added, “We as lawmakers--- that is what we need to be doing.”

Senator Weinberg closed the debate by thanking colleagues for the discourse and civility. She recalled: “The Supreme Court of New Jersey has already said same-sex couples are entitled to the all the same rights of marriage...”

Alas, the bill was defeated in a vote of 14 to 20². Because Governor Chris Christie has said he would veto the bill, It is unlikely to be voted upon again during his term. The opposing Senators and the gallery cheered the defeat.

Sources: ¹ NJN Public Television and Radio; ² New Jersey Office of Legislative Services

Nico Pellegrini & Abigail Cole contributed to this report.

New Jersey Senate To Vote On Gay Marriage Bill



Rio "Carnaval" Reception Thrills in FL

By Nico Pellegrini
savvyplanners.com Staff

On a gorgeous December Saturday afternoon in south Florida our team flew in from our headquarters in New Jersey and created the feel of "Carnaval in Rio", a multicultural ceremony, an elegant, poolside soir e and a VIP lounge for a wedding client there.

Senior Event Designer, Marcinho, combined the cultures of the Brides (Brasil and Portugal) in such ways as using the colors of the flags of both countries, the national flower of Brasil, candles, LEDs, theatrical

We brought in a DJ, Emcee, sound engineer, a cabana, bars, private chefs and servers and the client sourced their own minister from a church they admired.

An intimate event for the client's family and closest friends, the reception phased into an after-party for the client's VIPs.



[Gina Carter Photography](#)



NJ Aquarium to host savvyplanners.com Lesbian Wedding this Summer

By David Maron
savvyplanners.com Staff

This July savvyplanners.com will create a dramatic, choreographed ceremony and reception at a NJ Aquarium.

Senior Event Designer, Marcinho, also known as **The Fairy-Wedding-Father™**, has fashioned an event that will, not only, not upstage this magnificent venue--- It will emphasize its astounding features.

We will take over all three sections of the facility: chapel, pre-event and banquet facilities and devise a space that could only be surpassed by the glowing adjacent Philadelphia skyline that night.

We'll share more details at the conclusion of the event but suffice it to say, we intend to produce an additional sensational wedding for this client!

Client Consultation a good thing

By Marcinho Savant
savvyplanners.com Staff

I had the great pleasure of consulting on a holiday party which happened a couple of weeks ago. The clients wanted a sleek, lounge-y, club-like feel and flow and came to us with a venue and many other concepts created. They purchased a two hour consultation session for assistance.

I was able to mold their existing concepts into event realities and recommend things that both men thought were good ideas or things they hadn't considered.

Mermaids and Drag Queens and dancers, Oh My! Though the event got postponed a day by a blizzard, this south Jersey, boardwalk event was enjoyed by all our client's guests!

"Thanks for your wisdom and well wishes...not sure how this would have unfolded without your guidance. I'll be getting photos up on Facebook on Monday so I hope we make you proud!" -Client

