

Exhibit 3

SFGate.com**Calif. gay marriage ban backers target businesses**

By LISA LEFF, Associated Press Writer

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(10-23) 17:22 PDT San Francisco, CA (AP) --

Leaders of the campaign to outlaw same-sex marriage in California are warning businesses that have given money to the state's largest gay rights group they will be publicly identified as opponents of traditional unions unless they contribute to the gay marriage ban, too.

ProtectMarriage.com, the umbrella group behind a ballot initiative that would overturn the California Supreme Court decision that legalized gay marriage, sent a certified letter this week asking companies to withdraw their support of Equality California, a nonprofit organization that is helping lead the campaign against Proposition 8.

"Make a donation of a like amount to ProtectMarriage.com which will help us correct this error," reads the letter. "Were you to elect not to donate comparably, it would be a clear indication that you are in opposition to traditional marriage. ... The names of any companies and organizations that choose not to donate in like manner to ProtectMarriage.com but have given to Equality California will be published."

The letter was signed by four members of the group's executive committee: campaign chairman Ron Prentice; Edward Dolejsi, executive director of the California Catholic Conference; Mark Jansson, a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints; and Andrew Pugno, the lawyer for ProtectMarriage.com. A donation form was attached. The letter did not say where the names would be published.

The unusual appeal reflects the increasing tension surrounding the tight race over Proposition 8, which would change the California Constitution to limit marriage to a man and a woman. In recent days, both sides in the debate have accused their opponents of threatening their respective campaign volunteers and misleading voters.

San Diego businessman Jim Abbott, who owns a real estate company and is a member of Equality California's board of directors, received one of the letters late Wednesday afternoon. His adult son called Abbott to read it to him.

"He characterized it as a bit 'Mafioso,'" Abbott said. "It was a little distressing, but it's consistent with how the 'yes' side of this campaign has been run, which is a bit over the top."

Abbott, who married his same-sex partner at the end of August, estimated that over the last decade he has given \$50,000 to Equality California, including a recent \$10,000 gift to underwrite a San Diego event that raised money to defeat Proposition 8.

When asked whether ProtectMarriage.com planned to name businesses that have supported the No on 8 campaign, Prentice initially said he was unaware of any such effort.

"I'm not familiar of any organized attack against organizations that have given to No on 8," he said Thursday.

But when asked about the letter to Equality California donors, Prentice confirmed they were authentic and said the ProtectMarriage.com campaign was asking businesses backing the other side "to reconsider taking a position on a moral issue in California."

Prentice said it was his understanding it was intended for large corporations such as cable operators Time Warner and Comcast instead of small business owners like Abbott. Both Time Warner and Comcast are listed on Equality California's Web site as corporate sponsors that gave \$50,000 each to the group.

Companies that have contributed directly to one of the campaign committees collecting cash to fight Proposition 8, including one set up by Equality California, also were recipients of the letter, Prentice said. That list includes companies such as Pacific Gas & Electric, Levi Strauss and AT&T.

"I think the IDing of, or outing of, any company is very secondary to the question of why especially a public corporation would choose to take a side knowing it would splinter it's own clientele," he said.

Equality California executive director Geoffrey Kors said Thursday he has heard from two other business owners besides Abbott.

"It's truly an outrageous attempt to extort people," Kors said.

While an anti-Proposition 8 group called Californians Against Hate has posted lists of gay marriage ban donors on the Internet and even launched boycotts of selected businesses, Kors said that work has been independent of the official No on 8 campaign.

"They are going after our long-term funding and trying to intimidate Equality California donors from giving any more to the No on 8 campaign and from giving to Equality California ever again."

While corporations often give to rival candidates for public office as a way of preserving their government access no matter who wins, tit-for-tat solicitations are almost unheard of in ballot initiative campaigns, said Robert Stern, president of the nonpartisan Center for Governmental Studies.

"This is a proposition where you are on one side or the other. You vote yes or no, not yes and no," Stern said.

Though unusual and disturbing, Stern said there was nothing illegal about ProtectMarriage.com hitting up Equality California supporters for money.

Sonya Eddings Brown, a ProtectMarriage.com spokeswoman, estimated that 36 companies were targeted for the letter and said those that do not respond with a contribution would be highlighted in a press release and on the campaign Web site.

She called the tactic "a frustrated response" to the intimidation felt by Proposition 8 supporters, who have had their lawn signs stolen and property vandalized in the closing days of the heated campaign.

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