



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on March 23, 2012

National Marriage Group Launches Starbucks Boycott

America's premier purveyor of overpriced coffee has become the target of a boycott launched by the National Organization for Marriage (NOM), a nationwide group battling for traditional marriage. On March 21 the group announced the launch of [DumpStarbucks.com](#), a website encouraging individuals to stop purchasing their daily latte or French roast brew at their local Starbucks because the Seattle-based company has made an official endorsement of same-sex marriage. The website also invites individuals to add their names to a petition sent to Starbucks, voice their concern to their local Starbucks, find local alternatives to the coffee shop, and inform friends about the boycott through Facebook and Twitter.



In [announcing the boycott](#), NOM's president, Brian Brown (left), explained that Starbucks "has taken a corporate position in support of redefining marriage for all of society. We will not tolerate an international company attempting to force its misguided values on citizens." He argued that the majority of Americans, as well as most customers in Starbucks' international market, "believe that marriage is between one man and one woman. They will not be pleased to learn that their money is being used to advance gay marriage in society.... Starbucks should be in the business of offering all its diverse customers a great cup of coffee, not taking sides against the views of its customers, vendors, and employees around the world."

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As reported by [The New American](#), in a [January 24 statement](#) Starbucks vice president Kalen Holmes announced that the coffee retailer was proudly joining "other leading Northwest employers in support of Washington State legislation recognizing marriage equality for same-sex couples."

That measure, which was aggressively pushed by Washington Governor Christine Gregoire and passed in February, legalized homosexual partnerships as equal to traditional marriage. However the law is being challenged by pro-family forces, including NOM, in a state ballot initiative and could be overturned in November.

In her statement, Holmes emphasized that legalizing same-sex marriage is "aligned with Starbucks business practices" and is "core to who we are and what we value as a company."

Additionally, Starbucks has added its endorsement to a legal brief asking the U.S. First Circuit Court of Appeals to uphold a ruling that reversed part of the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act. If upheld, the ruling would require the federal government to recognize homosexual "marriage" in those states where it has been legalized.



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NOM's Brown noted that a percentage of "every cup of coffee purchased at a Starbucks anywhere in the world goes to fund this corporate assault on marriage. Voters in thirty US states have voted to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman. No state vote has ever supported gay marriage." He added that in "many areas of the world where Starbucks does business, the concept of 'gay marriage' is unheard of and deeply offensive to cultural, moral and religious values."

Brown explained that NOM is "urging consumers across the globe to 'Dump Starbucks' because the massive international corporation has taken a corporate-wide position that marriage between one man and one woman should be eliminated and that same-sex marriage should become the norm." He added that "Starbucks has declared it will use its influence and resources in a culture war against at least half its U.S. customers, and against the vast majority of its international consumers who do not share Starbucks' position."

Jonathan Baker, the head of NOM's Corporate Fairness Project said that the coffee giant "may have been hoping that what happens in Seattle stays in Seattle, but we are going to make sure Starbucks customers, not only here but worldwide, know that drinking a cup of Starbucks coffee promotes gay marriage." Baker, who is a Starbucks stockholder, said it is ironic that "even as Starbucks endorsed gay marriage here, its website on involvement in the Middle East claims the corporation does not 'support any political or religious cause.'" Added Baker, "Lying to your customers is never a good business model."

[OneNewsNow.com](#) reported that at Starbucks annual shareholders meeting March 21 in Seattle, shareholder Tom Strohbar of the [Corporate Morality Action Center](#) took the floor to voice the concern he and others had over the company's endorsement of homosexual marriage. "What concerns me is possible economic boycotts, shareholder resolutions, things that might affect the sales of our company, the earnings," he stated to the assembled company officials and shareholders. "Is it prudent to risk the economic interests of all the shareholders for something that might affect the private lives of a very small percentage of our employees?"

OneNewsNow reported that "Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz responded by saying that while he did not want to be disrespectful to Strohbar, he believes the decision 'is right for our company.'"

Declared Schultz: "We believe it's defensible — but we're not reaching that decision to in any way offend you or anyone else. And I would say candidly, since we made that decision there has not been any dilution whatsoever in our business."

Addressing the announced boycott, Schultz told shareholders that "Starbucks has many constituents, and from time to time we are going to make a decision that we think is consistent with the heritage and the tradition of the company that is perhaps maybe inconsistent with one group's view of the world."

NOM's co-founder and president Maggie Gallagher, was also at the Starbucks shareholders meeting, but was left standing at the microphone before she could speak as Schultz closed down the questions and comments. "Millions of good, honorable, decent, and loving people believe that marriage is the union of husband and wife for a reason," [Gallagher later wrote](#) — "these unions make new life and connect children to a mom and a dad. Of all the sustainable ecosystems Starbucks might want to support, surely this one is worthy of a company that bills itself as a company with a conscience?"

She wrote that she had planned to tell the Starbucks CEO that NOM was asking "all his customers, employees, and vendors who do not support gay marriage to make their presence known."

Wrote Gallagher: "Customers across the world have a right to know that contrary to the promises made



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by the corporation in the Middle East and elsewhere, Starbucks does subsidize political causes. Drinking a cup of Starbucks coffee, sadly, means supporting gay marriage.”



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