



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**TRADEMARK OFFICE SAYS YES TO “DYKES ON BIKES”**

**BROOKE OLIVER LAW GROUP, NATIONAL CENTER FOR LESBIAN RIGHTS, AND  
TOWNSEND AND TOWNSEND AND CREW VICTORIOUS IN FIGHT FOR LESBIAN  
VISIBILITY**

*“We are thrilled ‘DYKES ON BIKES’ will be protected under trademark and recognized as a celebration of our identity.”*

(San Francisco, December 8, 2005) The San Francisco Women’s Motorcycle Contingent announced today that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office reversed its initial refusal to trademark the name “DYKES ON BIKES.”

“We are thrilled ‘DYKES ON BIKES’ will be protected under trademark and recognized as a celebration of our identity,” said Vick Germany, the group’s president. “We are grateful for the incredible advocacy of Brooke Oliver and Pablo Manga of the Brooke Oliver Law Group, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, and Townsend and Townsend and Crew,” she said. DLA Piper Rudnick also stood ready to file an amicus brief in support of the group’s appeal.

“The positive spirit and legitimacy of ‘DYKES ON BIKES’ has been vindicated. We are delighted that we have reversed this official federal position of bigotry,” said Brooke Oliver, the lead attorney on the case.

The Trademark Office twice rejected the group’s application for a trademark last year, on the ground that the name “DYKES ON BIKES” is allegedly disparaging to lesbians. In response, the Brooke Oliver Law Group and the National Center for Lesbian Rights submitted more than two dozen expert declarations from scholars, linguists, psychologists, and activists demonstrating how the word “dyke” has evolved to become a positive term and that lesbians view “DYKES ON BIKES” as a symbol of pride and

empowerment. In the face of overwhelming evidence, the Trademark Office then denied the request a final time.

After bringing in additional pro bono assistance from intellectual property law firm Townsend and Townsend and Crew, the San Francisco Women's Motorcycle Contingent appealed the denial to the Trademark Trial and Appeal Board. After remand, and in a decision issued December 5, the Trademark Office reversed itself and finally published the application. After a short period for public comment, the mark can proceed to registration. This will be the first time the term "dyke" has been trademarked as a stand alone part of a trademark.

"Given trademarks like 'Queer Eye for the Straight Guy,' any other decision simply was unacceptable" remarked Townsend's Gregory Gilchrist.

"We were outraged by the Trademark Office's initial ruling, which was an insult to our community," said Shannon Minter, NCLR Legal Director. "'DYKES ON BIKES' is a vital community organization, and we are relieved that the final ruling will permit them to protect their name and reputation."

The San Francisco Women's Motorcycle Contingent, which is a non-profit group, was forced to seek registration of the name "DYKES ON BIKES" when an individual, unassociated with the organization, attempted to use the phrase for commercial purposes and wanted to charge contingents throughout the country for its use. The San Francisco Women's Motorcycle Contingent organization decided to obtain a trademark to protect the non-commercial use of the name and its meaning to the LGBT community from private commercial use.

The San Francisco Women's Motorcycle Contingent was represented by Brooke Oliver and Pablo Manga of the Brooke Oliver Law Group, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, and Gregory Gilchrist, Leigh Kirmsse and Gia Cincone of Townsend and Townsend and Crew LLP. Anne-Marie Dinius of DLA Piper Rudnick also joined the legal team. Additional information about the case is accessible at [www.artemama.com](http://www.artemama.com) and [www.nclrights.org](http://www.nclrights.org).

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The National Center for Lesbian Rights is a national legal resource center committed to advancing the rights and safety of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people and their families through litigation, public policy advocacy, and public education. We can be reached through our website at [www.nclrights.org](http://www.nclrights.org).