

Hallmark assailed for gay marriage cards: Company responding to increasing demand

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Hallmark's decision to introduce a new line of cards for gay marriages has drawn criticism from conservative Christian groups who accuse the company of promoting immoral behavior.

Hallmark is releasing four cards specifically for same-sex couples in response to increasing demand after gay marriage was legalized in California in May.

Tim Wildmon, president of the Tupelo, Mississippi-based American Family Association, called Hallmark's decision "appalling."

"I'm pretty jaded now with everything I've seen, but Hallmark is synonymous with all-American . . . wholesomeness," Wildmon said. "So this does surprise me that they want to get into the culture wars."

Hallmark spokesperson Sarah Gronberg Kolell said the company began distributing the cards in July, but they will not be widely available until next summer.

The well-known greeting card company introduced a new line of cards last year to support people "coming out"—making public their sexual orientation.

Tony Perkins of the Washington-based Family Research Council denounced Hallmark's plans and encouraged the council's supporters to contact the card company. "Placing profits over character should never be a good business decision," Perkins said. "This is far from being the 'very best,'" he said, mimicking a Hallmark slogan.

Meanwhile, Kathryn Hamm, president of gayweddings.com, said Hallmark's decision to issue same-sex wedding cards is significant. Hallmark "is a company that has always sort of been the all-American, feel-good card . . . so their embracing it is a really big deal," Hamm said. *-Religion News Service*