



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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U.S. Supreme Court Clears Way, Once and For All, For Freedom to Marry
State lawmakers to circulate legislation to rid state's constitution of discriminatory ban

Madison – Today, the Supreme Court of the United States handed down a landmark ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, bringing final resolution and clarity to same-sex couples' freedom to marry in all 50 states. Anticipating the ruling, three LGBT state lawmakers have drafted, and will be circulating for co-sponsorship, legislation to remove Wisconsin's ban on same-sex marriage from the state's constitution. Rep. JoCasta Zamarripa (D-Milwaukee), Rep. Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit), and Sen. Tim Carpenter (D-Milwaukee) all weighed in on the historic decision by the country's high court.

"The fight has finally concluded for LGBT Americans and we are victorious on the issue of marriage equality," Rep. Zamarripa said. "I applaud the Supreme Court in arriving at this landmark decision and ensuring equal opportunity and freedom for all people who want to live their lives in the unity of marriage with the person they love the most. This is a historic moment for our country's LGBT community."

"Make no mistake, this decision is about love, family, and equality," Rep. Spreitzer said. "Today, the Supreme Court recognized what a majority of Wisconsinites already knew: that hard-working Americans have a fundamental right to marry and raise a family with the people they love, regardless of sexual orientation. This is a great day for Wisconsin, for the LGBT community, and for all Americans. Today's ruling will only serve to strengthen all of America's families."

"With its ruling today, the court recognized that the government should not erect barriers in front of two people who are willing to undertake the rights and responsibilities of the ultimate expression of love and commitment - marriage. The decision today affords LGBT families the dignity and protections all families deserve under the law," said Sen. Carpenter.



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Wisconsin amended its constitution in 2006 with a short-sighted ban on same-sex couples' freedom to marry. This ban was overturned last year by the Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, a ruling that was upheld when the U.S. Supreme Court rejected an appeal from Wisconsin's Governor and Attorney General, who hoped to keep the same-sex marriage ban. The Supreme Court's order effectively allowed same-sex marriage in Wisconsin and numerous other states, but did not give a definitive answer on same-sex marriage nationwide. Today's ruling provides clarity for the entire country: the freedom to love and marry regardless of sexual orientation is a fundamental American right.

Despite the Supreme Court's landmark ruling today, discriminatory language will remain in Wisconsin's constitution until removed, even though it cannot be enforced. In the eight and a half years since Wisconsin voters approved the ban, public opinion has shifted significantly in favor of the freedom to marry. Strong majorities in Wisconsin and across the country now agree with today's ruling. The legislation introduced by Rep. Zamarripa, Rep. Spreitzer, and Sen. Carpenter will give the voters of Wisconsin the chance to remove discrimination from their constitution once and for all.

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