



# WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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## **Reps. Zamarripa and Spreitzer Support Equality Agenda**

MADISON- As LGBT Pride Month draws to a close, Wisconsin State Representatives JoCasta Zamarripa (D-Milwaukee) and Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit) issued the following joint statement:

“June is LGBT Pride Month across the country and across the world. As Pride Month draws to a close, we remind Wisconsinites to extend this celebration far and beyond the month of June. By channeling the spirit of Pride Month year-round, we can promote inclusion and acceptance of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities throughout our state and our country. Ridding ourselves of prejudice and finding mutual respect for one another despite our differences is the responsibility of every Wisconsinite.

“In that spirit, supporting and advancing pro-LGBT equality legislation has been, and will continue to be, a top priority for us and our fellow Democrats. This past session, we have worked hard to identify and eliminate burdensome and discriminatory practices in our state’s laws.

“Along with our fellow out Democratic colleague, Sen. Tim Carpenter (D-Milwaukee), we introduced AB 816, a bill which would update our state statutes and recognize the legality of same-sex marriage and the rights that accompany it. Same-sex couples who wish to adopt or give birth to a child of their own desperately need that recognition, as our state statutes do not accurately reflect last summer’s landmark United States Supreme Court ruling on marriage equality.

“Similarly, our state constitution still carries the stain of discrimination, expressly banning same-sex marriages and domestic partnerships. That is why we introduced SJR 46, which would wipe that intolerant and unconstitutional ban from our state’s most important document.

“Unfortunately, some state legislators still endorse bigoted ideologies that are as unjust as they are demeaning. The pragmatic legislative initiatives we put forth to bring equality to Wisconsin were all dismissed because the Republican majority chooses to advance their own partisan agenda and ignore the best interests of LGBT Wisconsinites.

“The anti-transgender, anti-LGBT ‘bathroom bill’ proposed by Rep. Jesse Kremer (R-Kewaskum) and his Republican caucus exemplifies closed-minded leadership, and endorsing such bigotry will only serve to drag Wisconsin backwards and endanger the lives of many LGBT Wisconsinites.

“Since 2012, we have worked to get a symbolic resolution recognizing June as LGBT Pride Month passed in the state legislature, but to no avail. Even after Wisconsin elected its first openly-gay Republican legislator, Rep. Todd Novak (R-Dodgeville), this small but important piece of legislation languished in the Republican-controlled legislature.

“We will continue to push for pro-LGBT equality policy alongside our Democratic colleagues. In addition to the measures we introduced this session, passage of a state-level gender identity non-discrimination law, as well as policies addressing LGBT youth homelessness, suicide prevention, and health and wellness are top priorities.

“As out, proud, openly-LGBT elected Democrats, we cannot stress enough the importance of celebrating our diversity as a state and nation by advancing for treatment and liberty to all. Just as President Obama echoed in his proclamation to make June, 2016 LGBT Pride Month, ‘LGBT individuals deserve to know their country stands beside them.’

“Let us work to combat the scourge of homophobia and help our fellow LGBT Wisconsinites live safe, happy, and authentic lives.”

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