



NEWS RELEASE
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Contact: Lenore Ostrowsky
publicaffairs@usccr.gov

U. S. Commission on Civil Rights Welcomes the Supreme Court Ruling on Marriage Equality

Washington, DC – The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights applauds the U.S. Supreme Court on its decision establishing the basic civil right of every American to freely choose a marriage partner. The high court ruled in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that same-sex couples have a constitutionally protected right to marry that must be recognized in all states, citing the 14th Amendment Equal Protection and Due Process Clauses.

The Commission expresses support for the words of Justice Kennedy: “No union is more profound than marriage, for it embodies the highest ideals of love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice, and family. In forming a marital union, two people become something greater than once they were. As some of the petitioners in these cases demonstrate, marriage embodies a love that may endure even past death. It would misunderstand these men and women to say they disrespect the idea of marriage. Their plea is that they do respect it, respect it so deeply that they seek to find its fulfillment for themselves. Their hope is not to be condemned to live in loneliness, excluded from one of civilization’s oldest institutions. They ask for equal dignity in the eyes of the law. The Constitution grants them that right.”

Chairman Castro states, “With this ruling, we celebrate the equality of all Americans before our Constitution. While this ruling is historic and sweeping for our nation, its most profound impact will be on those individual acts of union of two people whose love will now, finally, be treated equally before the law. Today, we celebrate, but tomorrow we begin the work anew of taking down the other vestiges of discrimination against members of the LGBT community in the workplace and wherever they may still exist.”

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights is an independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights matters and issuing a federal civil rights

enforcement report. For information about Commission's reports and meetings, visit <http://www.usccr.gov>.