

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
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Contact: Rob Marus, Communications Director: 202.724.5646; robert.marus@dc.gov

**Attorney General Racine Welcomes High Court's Decision
Legalizing Marriage Equality Nationwide**

District Joined Friend-of-the-Court Brief Urging Pro-Marriage Equality Decision

WASHINGTON, D. C. – Attorney General Karl A. Racine today welcomed the news that nationwide marriage equality is now the law of the land. In a 5-4 ruling, the Supreme Court's majority said today that the Constitution forbids states from denying same-sex couples the right to marry. Earlier this year, the District joined 16 other states in filing a friend-of-the-court brief urging the court to usher in nationwide marriage equality through their decision the *Obergefell v. Hodges* cases.

"This is a landmark victory for equal rights, and another huge step in our nation's long march toward living up to the ideals of its founding documents," Attorney General Racine said. **"Today, a majority of the nation's highest court said the Constitution guarantees the dignity of all couples equally – a huge win for all who believe in civil rights. In particular, I am happy that same-sex couples in the rest of the nation will now enjoy the same rights and governmental recognition that they do here in the District of Columbia."**

The District was one of the nation's earliest jurisdictions to legalize full marriage equality. Prior to today's decision, 12 states still banned same-sex marriage, and 21 states that were licensing same-sex marriages did so only because federal court cases had ruled their bans on same-sex marriages unconstitutional.

The amicus brief the District joined called attention to the negative effects of states choosing not to recognize same-sex couples for state purposes, such as the denial of a spouse's right to visit their spouse in the hospital or the inability to join in a spouse's employer-provided family benefits. Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey filed the brief in conjunction with 16 other jurisdictions, including California, Connecticut, Delaware, the District, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, New Hampshire, New Mexico, New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, and Washington state.

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