

City of Philadelphia



Council of the City of Philadelphia
Office of the Chief Clerk
Room 402, City Hall
Philadelphia

(Resolution No. 250660)

RESOLUTION

Celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the United States Supreme Court's landmark marriage equality ruling, *Obergefell v. Hodges*, and honoring the lead plaintiff James "Jim" Obergefell and the 29 other plaintiffs who bravely stood up for their fundamental right to marry.

WHEREAS, James "Jim" Obergefell was born in Sandusky, Ohio on July 7, 1966; and

WHEREAS, Obergefell met John Arthur in his mid-twenties, and the two had a loving relationship for more than two decades; and

WHEREAS, In 2011, Arthur was diagnosed with the progressive neurodegenerative disorder Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis, also known as ALS; and

WHEREAS, Knowing that they had precious little time left together, Obergefell and Arthur traveled to Maryland in July 2013 to legally marry; and

WHEREAS, When they returned home, Obergefell was told that, under Ohio's same-sex marriage ban, he could not be listed as Arthur's surviving spouse on his death certificate despite his legal marriage in Maryland; and

WHEREAS, Obergefell filed a lawsuit in federal court challenging Ohio's refusal to recognize his legal marriage; and

WHEREAS, Obergefell's case made its way to the United States Supreme Court, where he was joined with other plaintiffs challenging same-sex marriage bans in Ohio, Michigan, Kentucky, and Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, On June 26, 2015, the Supreme Court ruled 5 to 4 that same-sex marriage bans violated the Fourteenth Amendment's guarantees of due process and equal protection under the law by denying same-sex couples the fundamental right to marry; and

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WHEREAS, Writing for the majority, Justice Anthony Kennedy affirmed that “the Constitution promises liberty to all within its reach, a liberty that includes certain specific rights that allow persons, within a lawful realm, to define and express their identity;” and

WHEREAS, The majority also affirmed that marriage was a fundamental right under the Constitution, with Kennedy writing that “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”; and

WHEREAS, According to the latest Census data, there are now over 700,000 married same-sex couples in the United States whose rights are protected by *Obergefell*; and

WHEREAS, As the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* has shown, no right is safe forever and it is up to all of us to continue to stand up in support of marriage equality, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Celebrates the 10th Anniversary of the United States Supreme Court’s landmark marriage equality ruling, *Obergefell v. Hodges*, and honoring the lead plaintiff James “Jim” *Obergefell* and the 29 other plaintiffs who bravely stood up for their fundamental right to marry.

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CERTIFICATION: This is a true and correct copy of the original Resolution, Adopted by the Council of the City of Philadelphia on the

Kenyatta Johnson
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL

Elizabeth McCollum
CHIEF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Introduced by: Councilmember Landau

Sponsored by: Councilmembers Landau, Gilmore Richardson, Gauthier, Thomas, Young, Brooks, Harrity, O'Rourke, Driscoll, Squilla, Bass and Ahmad