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LDF Applauds President Biden’s Signing of Respect for Marriage Act

Today, President Biden signed the Respect for Marriage Act into law after bipartisan votes in the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate advanced the bill to his desk on December 8.

In response to the Act becoming law, [Legal Defense Fund](https://www.ldefund.org/) (LDF) President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson issued the following statement:

“LDF applauds President Biden and the bipartisan group of Congressmembers who advanced this critical protection for LGBTQ+ and interracial couples – one that will also, at long last, repeal the Defense of Marriage Act years after it was twice declared unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court.

“In support of interracial marriage in the lead-up to the landmark *Loving v. Virginia* ruling and again in support of marriage equality prior to the historic decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, LDF has repeatedly argued that no one should be discriminated against because of who they, including based on their race, ethnicity, or sexuality.

“Anything less than full equality for couples is the equivalent of relegating LGBTQ+ people and interracial couples to an inferior status in our nation. And, as we have seen all too often, perceiving a group of people as inferior leads to hateful speech, discriminatory laws, and violence intended to intimidate and terrorize marginalized people and their communities.

“This long overdue law will prevent the stripping of rights and the upending of the lives of couples and families across the country by those who seek to exclude certain people from the freedom to marry. Indeed, this freedom has long been recognized as a part of our fundamental right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness – a declaration made hundreds of years ago that remains core to our democracy. We thank President Biden and Congress for their leadership on this important issue.”

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Founded in 1940, the [Legal Defense Fund](https://www.ldefund.org/) (LDF) is the nation’s first civil rights law organization. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Please note that LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights.

