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Dear Friends,

Last week, I introduced a bill to repeal the poorly named *Defense of Marriage Act* (DOMA) and send that shameful law into the history books where it belongs. DOMA discriminates against lawfully married gay and lesbian couples and wrongly denies them the federal rights and benefits afforded to married couples of the opposite sex. My bill to repeal DOMA, the *Respect for Marriage Act*, was introduced with the support of 108 Democrats in the House, including Democratic Leaders Nancy Pelosi, Steny Hoyer, and John Larson.



Rep. Nadler introduces his bill to repeal the discriminatory bill known as DOMA.. [Watch the video.](#)

When DOMA became law in 1996, it was not possible for gay or lesbian couples to marry anywhere in the world. Fifteen years later, there are thousands of gay and lesbian couples that are legally married. Far from harming the institution of marriage, these couples have embraced this time-honored tradition and the serious personal and legal commitment that it entails.

These married couples serve in their communities, pay their taxes, struggle to balance work and family, raise children, and care for aging parents. Like every other married couple, they have undertaken a serious effort to care for and support each other and their families. Yet under DOMA, federal law treats them as complete strangers. This defies common sense and harms the thousands of married couples who are denied federal responsibilities and rights – including access to programs like Social Security – which other couples can count on when they marry.

Recently, the Obama Administration concluded that DOMA is unconstitutional and that, because of this, the Justice Department would no longer defend the law in court. This prompted House Republican leaders to push for the House to launch its own legal defense of DOMA, spending tax payer dollars not to create jobs but to defend a hurtful and discriminatory law. This makes passage of the *Respect for Marriage Act* more critical than ever.

I was proud to be joined at the introduction ceremony by the lead co-sponsors of the bill, Democratic Reps. Barney Frank, Tammy Baldwin, Jared Polis, David Cicilline, and John Conyers. I am also very pleased to report that Senators Feinstein, Leahy, Gillibrand, and 15 of their colleagues have introduced a companion bill in the Senate.

Our legislation has the support of dozens of civil rights and LGBT legal and advocacy organizations, including the Human Rights Campaign, ACLU, National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Freedom to Marry, Equality Matters, Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders, Lambda Legal, People for the American Way, Americans for Democratic Action, Courage Campaign, National

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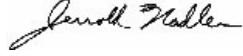
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Center for Lesbian Rights, California Faith for Equality, and many others.

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Want to watch video of me introducing the *Respect for Marriage Act* or see more photos from the event? Follow my work on [Facebook](#), [YouTube](#), and [Flickr](#) where you can see more of my work on LGBT equality and many other issues.

Sincerely,



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