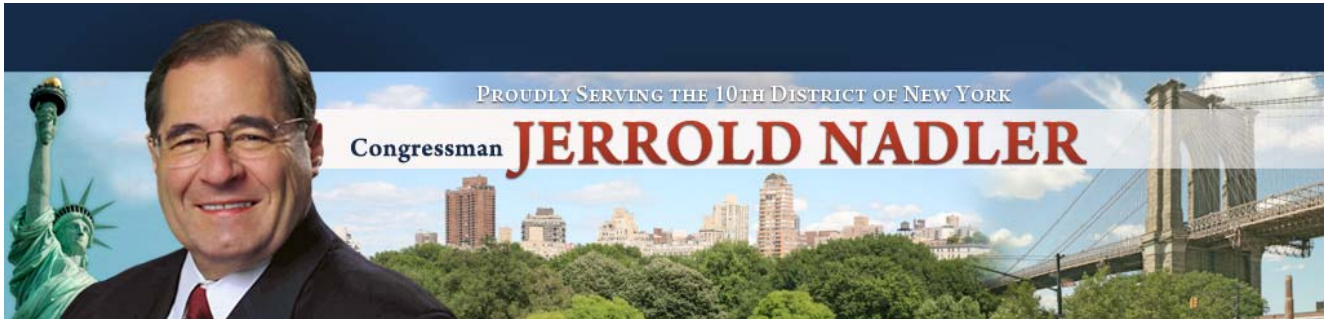


August 6, 2015

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Dear Friends,

A Victory for Marriage Equality at the Supreme Court



This past June, I was delighted when the Supreme Court affirmed the Constitutional right of same-sex couples to marry. The 5-4 decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges* represents another momentous step in the journey towards fulfilling the Constitution's promise that all people are created equal. Same-sex couples will finally be able to enjoy the same rights that heterosexual couples take for granted: entering into the bonds of marriage and being able to access the associated rights and protections in all 50 states. In *Loving v. Virginia*, the landmark case that legalized interracial marriage, Justice Warren professed that marriage is "fundamental to our very existence and survival." This statement holds as true today as it did when Justice Warren wrote it.

Despite this landmark decision, we still have a long way to go to ensure full equality and protections under the law for all of our citizens. LGBT Americans can still be unfairly fired from their jobs, denied housing, and turned away from stores simply for being who they are. Along with members of the LGBT Equality Caucus, I was proud to introduce the *Equality Act* to address the remaining areas of law where it is still legal to discriminate against LGBT Americans, including education, housing, credit, employment and public accommodations. The *Equality Act* will help ensure that all individuals receive the same dignity, respect and opportunities they

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Should legislators be able to interfere with a woman's private reproductive choices?

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deserve, and I will not abandon the fight for this cause until such equality becomes a reality for all.



Assault on Abortion Rights: Stopping the Hyde Amendment

Over the last several years, states have passed wave after wave of anti-choice legislation meant to deprive women of their Constitutional right to access abortion services and the ability to control their reproductive health. I believe Republicans at the federal level have adopted a similar strategy by attempting to expand the reach of the Hyde Amendment, a legal provision that prohibits federal tax dollars from being spent on abortion services, to include the private insurance market. This assault on woman's rights cannot go unanswered.

I believe it is time we adopt a more proactive approach to remove existing restrictions on access to reproductive health services and ensure safe and legal abortion is available to all women, no matter their income level. That is why I co-sponsored the *Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance (EACH) Woman Act*, which would repeal the Hyde Amendment's existing restrictions in addition to preventing the states from interfering in a woman's health care decisions.

Attempts to expand the Hyde Amendment language are not about health – They are about anti-choice politicians' belief in moral superiority; that they know best about what a woman should do with her own body. No politician has the right to tell women that they cannot make their own personal health care decisions, to dictate what procedures doctors may use, or to lecture scientists on how they should conduct women's health research. The *EACH Woman Act* is vital in protecting a woman's rights because it ensures that federal, state, and local legislators cannot interfere with a woman's private reproductive health choices. I am proud to support the *EACH Woman Act* and will vigorously work for its passage into law.

Sincerely,

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