



New York State Public Health Association (NYSPHA)

September 20, 2022

Dear Senators:

Together we, the signatories of this letter, write in support of the Respect for Marriage Act (H.R. 8404/S. 4556) representing a diversity of health, education, and human services organizations and professional associations that provide public assistance, research and lifesaving services and care to nearly every community in the United States. Fairness, equal treatment, and opportunity are central to our values because we care about our clients and patients, their families and the communities we serve. Americans from all walks of life, across demographics, geographies, and party lines agree that loving, committed couples have the right to be respected and protected under the law. Support for marriage equality for same-sex couples and interracial couples is at an all-time high -- with vast majorities of the public supporting these policies. As many of us highlighted in our support for Marriage Equality in 2015, a patchwork of inconsistent and discriminatory state marriage laws perpetuates stigma and disparity, which harms the health, mental health, and economic wellbeing of those impacted.

This is why we support the passage of the Respect for Marriage Act. Codifying a consistent and inclusive federal standard conferred by the Loving, Windsor, and Obergefell rulings will help to ensure marriage equality, stability for couples and their families, and reduce stigma. No person, including same-sex couples and interracial couples protected by this bill, should fear their marriage will not be recognized by the federal government or their employment benefits threatened.

Our organizations strongly embrace diversity and inclusion because we want everyone we serve to feel included and welcomed as their true, authentic selves. Strong families are the foundation of our social fabric, and fair and equitable treatment for all families, under the law, will lead to improved health and well-being, economic and educational opportunities, and to a better future for future generations. As health, education, and human services providers committed to inclusion and equality for our clients and patients, their families, and the communities we serve, we call on the Senate to pass the Respect for Marriage Act.

Sincerely,

<Sign on letter>