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To Mark 20 Years Of The Freedom To Marry, Centerline Liberties Releases Groundbreaking Report

Conducted By RAND, Analysis Disproves Arguments of Opponents of the Freedom to Marry & Chronicles Myriad Positive Impacts

WASHINGTON D.C - Twenty years after the issuance of the first marriage licenses to same-sex couples in the United States, Centerline Liberties, in partnership with RAND, released a landmark report examining the impact of the freedom to marry for same-sex couples on American families and society at large. The two-section report offers groundbreaking analysis and original research evaluating the causal effects of changes in marriage policy across states with regard to marriage rates, divorce rates, and other outcomes in the general population.

The full report can be accessed [here](#).

In one section of the report, RAND economists analyze four different data sets tracking marriage behaviors across a 15-year period using the latest advances in difference-in-differences methodology. The report finds that legalizing marriage for same-sex couples did not result in different-sex couples retreating from marriage or cohabitation. In fact, “if issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples had any effect on the marital patterns of different-sex couples, it was to spur a very modest increase in marriage [...] The only empirical evidence of changes suggests a potential renewed salience of marriage among the broader public.”

The other section of the report includes a comprehensive evidence review of every quantitative study about marriage for same-sex couples in the United States, analyzing findings from 96 studies conducted over 25 years. Among the positive effects of the freedom to marry for same-sex couples include increased adoption rates, increased mortgage applications, savings to the nation’s health care system and enhanced public safety and health.

“For years, supporters of the freedom to marry have argued that its implementation would bolster the institution of marriage, lead to more couples marrying, and result in stronger families and communities. Twenty years later, it’s clear those arguments have the benefit of being proven right,” said **Centerline Liberties President James Dozier**. “It shouldn’t surprise anyone to learn that expanding access to the freedom to marry has only resulted in positive outcomes for the economy, families and public health. This empirical data should put to rest any lingering doubts.”

“The 20-year anniversary of the freedom to marry is not only a time of celebration, but also a moment to recognize the indisputable fact that marriage builds stronger families and communities,” said **former U.S. Representative Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL)**. “The freedom to marry has lifted up all Americans, leading to a more just and inclusive society. Those who

support the policies of limited government, economic prosperity and stronger families should be the loudest champions of same-sex marriage.”

“The freedom to marry has led to a multitude of positive outcomes for everyone,” added **former U.S. Representative Barbara Comstock (R-VA)**. “Stronger families, more freedom, better health care and less discrimination — these are traits consistent with the Republican Party, and these are the outcomes we have seen grow over the last two decades.”

“Two decades of marriage equality have left a clear trail of more freedom, stronger families, more protection for children and more fairness,” said **Ken Mehlman, Founder, Project Right Side and lead signer on a brief of 300 conservatives in support of Obergefell v. Hodges**. “As conservatives, we should promote freedom and limited government, and that includes supporting American citizens’ freedom to marry the person they love.”

As the societal benefits of marriage equality have continued to take hold, public support has continued to grow. Eight years after the *Obergefell* Supreme Court decision that legalized same-sex marriage nationally, a Gallup survey from [June 2023](#) found 71 percent of Americans believing same-sex marriage should be legal, including [more than half](#) (55%) of Republicans. Twelve Senate Republicans and 39 GOP members of the House of Representatives voted for the 2022 Respect for Marriage Act, offering federal protections for same-sex and interracial marriages.

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Centerline Liberties is a nonprofit focused on advancing policy solutions capable of defending core constitutional liberties, preserving a free market economy, and limiting the role of government in Americans’ everyday lives.

RAND is a research organization that develops solutions to public policy challenges to help make communities throughout the world safer and more secure, healthier and more prosperous. As a nonpartisan organization, RAND is widely respected for operating independent of political and commercial pressures.