



Legislation Text

File #: 26226, Version: 1

Fiscal Note

No appropriation required.

Title

Proclaiming June 12 as "Loving Day" in the City of Madison, Wisconsin.

Body

WHEREAS, in 1958, Richard and Mildred Loving got married in Washington, D.C., where interracial marriage was legal. Once back in Virginia, the newlyweds were arrested and threatened with jail time. A Virginia judge told them, "Almighty God created the races white, black, yellow, Malay and red, and he placed them on separate continents. The fact that he separated the races shows that he did not intend for the races to mix." He sentenced Richard and Mildred to a year in jail each, citing an 1883 Supreme Court case that said if a mixed-race couple were punished equally, there would be no discrimination.

WHEREAS, to avoid prison, the Lovings agreed to move to Washington and not return to Virginia for 25 years. After five years, however, the couple longed to see their family and friends in Virginia. With the help of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), they fought their way to the Supreme Court. An ACLU lawyer recalled when Richard simply stated what the legal argument should be: "Tell the court I love my wife, and it is just unfair that I can't live with her in Virginia."

WHEREAS, on June 12, 1967, in the case *Loving v. Virginia*, the Supreme Court unanimously struck down the country's anti-miscegenation laws, allowing interracial couples across the country to marry. Chief Justice Earl Warren delivered the opinion, writing that anti-miscegenation laws "deprive the Lovings of liberty" and that the "freedom to marry has long been recognized as one of the vital personal rights essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness." Virginia's anti-miscegenation laws had been on the books for 305 years.

WHEREAS, June 12 has since become a grass-roots holiday in the U.S., especially for multiracial couples and families known as "Loving Day" in honor of Richard and Mildred Loving.

WHEREAS, in 2006, the State of Wisconsin adopted a political referendum that defined marriage as *"Only a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in this state. A legal status identical or substantially similar to that of marriage for unmarried individuals shall not be valid or recognized in this state."*

WHEREAS, the City of Madison objects to the prohibition in Wisconsin of same-sex marriage because it denies dignity and respect, equal opportunities, financial and medical security to same-sex relationships;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City of Madison Common Council proclaims June 12 as "Loving Day" in Madison, Wisconsin in honor of Richard and Mildred Loving and to honor loving, committed relationships regardless of whether the partners are allowed to marry by law.