



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Kevin S. Parker

## Senator Parker on the Supreme Court Decision Striking Down the Defense Against Marriage Act

KEVIN S. PARKER June 27, 2013

| ISSUE: **COURTS**



(Albany, NY) “Today the Supreme Court upheld equal rights for All Americans by ruling the Defense of Marriage Act unconstitutional. The Defense of Marriage Act (commonly referred to as DOMA) allowed states to refuse to recognize a same-sex marriage performed in another state, and restricted federal marriage benefits for same-sex couples.

I commend the brave widower, Edith Windsor of New York, that sued the federal government for her equal right to receive a tax refund after her spouse passed away in 2009. Her steadfast courage has brought this country one more step forward in achieving true

equality.

Before DOMA was found unconstitutional, individuals were denied their rights in bankruptcy, public employee benefits, estate tax, and immigration matters all because they followed their hearts, rather than letting discrimination be their guide, with regard to whom to marry. That was morally wrong, and I agree with Justice Kennedy, DOMA was "a deprivation of the equal liberty of persons that is protected by the Fifth Amendment."

I applaud Justices Anthony Kennedy, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan for their thoughtful decision today in United States v. Windsor. However, there is more work to be done.

New York was one of the leading states to pass marriage equality and we must continue to lead in protecting everyone under the law. Currently in New York State people are being fired from their jobs, kicked out of their homes, being denied credit or denied access to public places, like restaurants, simply for being transgender. We must right this wrong. We must lead the fight in eradicating gender discrimination by passing the Gender Expression Non-Discrimination Act (GENDA).

As I have always done, I will continue to support legislation, laws, and decisions that protect equal rights. I look forward to the day when GENDA comes to the Senate floor for a vote and passage into law."

### **About Senator Kevin Parker**

Senator Kevin S. Parker is intimately familiar with the needs of his ethnically diverse community in the heart of Brooklyn that consists of 318,000 constituents in Flatbush, East Flatbush, Midwood, Ditmas Park, Kensington, Windsor Terrace, and Park Slope. He is the Ranking Member of the Senate Energy and Telecommunications and the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Committees, Assistant Democratic Leader for Intergovernmental Affairs, and Chair of the Democratic Task Force on New Americans.

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