September 16, 2022

Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-CA)
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of the American Psychological Association (APA), the leading scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States, and our more than 133,000 members, I write in strong support of S. 4556, the Respect for Marriage Act. This bipartisan legislation repeals the discriminatory Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), enshrining marriage equality in federal law and providing additional legal protections for same-sex and interracial couples.

APA has a long history of using scientific research and data to support equal access to legal marriage, including supporting legal benefits and civil marriage for same-sex couples. For example, APA’s amicus briefs have been influential in shaping laws and policies around legal marriage. The brief APA filed in Obergefell v. Hodges - the landmark case where the Supreme Court barred states from denying marriage licenses to same-sex couples - supplied research supporting the conclusion that homosexuality is a normal expression of human sexuality, and that gay men and lesbians can form stable, committed relationships equivalent to heterosexual relationships. APA has also adopted several researched-based policies that support the rights of gay and lesbian people, including a 2011 resolution affirming marriage equality for same-sex couples and a 2022 resolution opposing discriminatory laws aimed at LGBTQ+ persons.

Marriage can offer substantial psychological and physical health benefits due to the moral, economic and social support extended to married couples. Policies restricting marriage rights exact harmful psychological effects on those denied these benefits by their state’s laws.

APA stands firmly with you in calling on the Senate to enact the Respect for Marriage Act now.

If you have any questions, please contact Leo Rennie, Senior Director, Congressional and Federal Relations at lrennie@apa.org.

Sincerely,

Arthur C. Evans, Jr., PhD
Chief Executive Officer

cc: Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)
    Senator Susan Collins (R-ME)
    Senator Ron Portman (R-OH)