



AIDS RESOURCE CENTER OF WISCONSIN

Excellence in HIV Health Care

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Statement by ARCW President and Chief Executive Officer Michael Gifford on Today's Historic Supreme Court Decision in Favor of Same Sex Marriage

ARCW President and Chief Executive Officer Michael Gifford is offering the following statement related to today's Supreme Court Decision in favor of allowing same sex marriages in every state.

"We live in a better world now than the one we woke up in this morning.

"Today, the Supreme Court settled once and for all that states cannot ban same sex individuals from marrying. This transformative decision for equality is long overdue and helps ensure the ability of all people to better and more fully participate in our communities and our nation.

"Thirty years into the AIDS epidemic, we know that discrimination and prejudice – regardless of who is the target of these terrible actions – harm our families, friends and neighbors in societal, interpersonal and economic ways. Discrimination also harms their health. Nowhere is this more clearly demonstrated than in the HIV epidemic among gay men.

"Of the 8,000 men and women living with HIV disease in Wisconsin, more than half are gay men. For too long, LGBTQ people have been discriminated against and marginalized, making it harder for them to access the education, health care and social services they need to live a long and healthy life including remaining HIV free.

"The pursuit of a world without AIDS is a noble journey along a difficult path. As we traverse the pathway to achieve that goal we must overcome discrimination so that everyone who needs access to HIV prevention, care and treatment can secure it. Today's decision by the Supreme Court is a monumental step along our path.

"The preamble of the United States Constitution calls upon us to form a 'more perfect Union.' Today the Supreme Court did just that."

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