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**CONTACT:** Rebekah Orr, Equality California  
**PHONE:** [415-498-0847](tel:415-498-0847) **EMAIL:** [rebekah@eqca.org](mailto:rebekah@eqca.org)

**Equality California Responds to Historic Senate Panel Vote to Repeal DOMA**

(San Francisco) The Senate Judiciary Committee voted 10-8 along party lines to approve the "Respect for Marriage Act," which would repeal the "Defense of Marriage Act" of 1996 that banned federal recognition of same-sex marriage. Equality California Chair Clarissa Filgioun issued the following statement in response:

"This historic vote moves us one step closer to doing away with the injustice of the 'Defense of Marriage Act.' Each day that loving, committed same-sex couples in this country are denied the freedom to marry, these couples and their families experience real harms that can have devastating consequences. It's time for Congress to end this cruel exclusion and ensure that all couples who have made a commitment to care for one another and share their lives together are treated with dignity and respect."

*Equality California (EQCA) is the largest statewide lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) rights advocacy organization in California. Over the past decade, Equality California has strategically moved California from a state with extremely limited legal protections for LGBT individuals to a state with some of the most comprehensive civil rights protections in the nation. Equality California successfully sponsored more than 85 pieces of legislation and continues to advance equality through legislative advocacy, electoral work, public education and community empowerment. [www.eqca.org](http://www.eqca.org)*