1	IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNI	TED STATES
2		X
3	JAMES OBERGEFELL, ET AL.,	:
4	Petitioners	: No. 14-556
5	V.	:
6	RICHARD HODGES, DIRECTOR,	:
7	OHIO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,	:
8	ET AL.	:
9		X
10	and	
11		X
12	VALERIA TANCO, ET AL.,	:
13	Petitioners	: No. 14-562
14	V.	:
15	BILL HASLAM, GOVERNOR OF	:
16	TENNESSEE, ET AL.	:
17		X
18	and	
19		x
20	APRIL DEBOER, ET AL.,	:
21	Petitioners	: No. 14-571
22	V.	:
23	RICK SNYDER, GOVERNOR OF	:
24	MICHIGAN, ET AL.	:
25		X

2

1	and
2	x
3	GREGORY BOURKE, ET AL., :
4	Petitioners : No. 14-574
5	v. :
6	STEVE BESHEAR, GOVERNOR :
7	OF KENTUCKY, ET AL. :
8	x
9	Washington, D.C.
10	Tuesday, April 28, 2015
11	
12	The above-entitled matter came on for oral
13	argument before the Supreme Court of the United States
14	at 11:39 a.m.
15	APPEARANCES:
16	DOUGLAS HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER, ESQ., Washington, D.C.; on
17	behalf of Petitioners on Question 2.
18	JOSEPH F. WHALEN, Associate Solicitor General,
19	Nashville, Tenn.; on behalf of Respondents on
20	Question 2.
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1 PROCEEDINGS 2 (12:29 p.m.)3 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: We'll now hear our 4 argument on the second question presented in this case. 5 Mr. Hallward-Driemeier. 6 ORAL ARGUMENT OF DOUGLAS HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER 7 ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS ON QUESTION 2 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Mr. Chief Justice, 8 9 and may it please the Court: 10 The Question 2 Petitioners are already 11 married. They have established those enduring 12 relationships, and they have a liberty interest that is 13 of fundamental importance to these couples and their 14 children. 15 A State should not be allowed to effectively dissolve that marriage without a sufficiently important 16 17 justification to do so. These Petitioners have built their lives 18 around their marriages, including bringing children into 19 20 their families, just as opposite-sex couples have done. But the non-recognition laws undermine the stability of 21 22 these families, though the States purport to support 23 just such stability. 24 JUSTICE ALITO: I was somewhat surprised by

the arguments you made in your brief because they are

25

- 1 largely a repetition of the arguments that we just heard
- 2 with respect to Question 1.
- 3 I thought the point of Question 2 was
- 4 whether there would be a -- an obligation to recognize a
- 5 same-sex marriage entered into in another State where
- 6 that is lawful even if the State itself,
- 7 constitutionally, does not recognize same-sex marriage.
- 8 I thought that's the question in Question 2. Is -- am I
- 9 wrong?
- 10 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: It is the question
- in Question 2, and this Court's decisions establish that
- 12 there is not only a right to be married, but a right to
- 13 remain married; that there is a protected liberty
- 14 interest in the status of one's marriage once it has
- 15 been established under law.
- 16 JUSTICE SCALIA: Even -- even if that
- 17 marriage is -- is not lawful under -- under the
- 18 receiving State's law; right?
- 19 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: That's right.
- 20 There is definitely --
- 21 JUSTICE SCALIA: Is that right? No
- 22 matter -- I mean, suppose -- well, let's say someone
- 23 gets married in a -- in a country that permits polygamy.
- Does a State have to acknowledge that marriage?
- 25 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well, of course,

- 1 the State could assert justifications for not doing so,
- 2 and I think there would be justifications --
- 3 JUSTICE SCALIA: Okay. So --
- 4 MR. HALLWARD-DREIMEIER: -- for not
- 5 recognizing such --
- 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: -- what would the
- 7 justification be? That it's contrary to the State's
- 8 public policy, I assume; right?
- 9 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well, no, Your
- 10 Honor. I think that the justification would be that the
- 11 State doesn't have such an institution. The -- a
- 12 polygamous relationship would raise all kinds of
- 13 questions that the State's marriage laws don't address.
- 14 JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, it would be the same
- 15 argument. We don't have such an institution. Our
- 16 marriage in this State, which we constitutionally can
- 17 have because the second question assumes that the first
- 18 question comes out the way the United States does not
- 19 want it to come out, the State says we only have the
- 20 institution of heterosexual marriage. We don't have the
- 21 institution of same-sex marriage.
- 22 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: No. The
- 23 institution is the institution of marriage, and the
- 24 experience of those States --
- 25 JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, you're saying that,

- 1 but the State doesn't. The State says the only
- 2 institution we have is heterosexual marriage.
- 3 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: The -- the point
- 4 I'm making, Your Honor, I think is demonstrated by what
- 5 has happened in those States where, by court order,
- 6 States have had to permit same-sex couples to marry.
- 7 All that has happened under their laws is
- 8 that they have had to remove gender-specific language
- 9 and substitute it with gender-neutral language.
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Now, could I -- could
- 11 I -- because I don't -- if you want to finish answering
- 12 Justice Scalia's --
- MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: I was going to say
- 14 that -- that plural relationships raise all manner of
- 15 questions that are not addressed by this State's current
- 16 marriage laws.
- 17 JUSTICE ALITO: What if it's not a plural
- 18 relationship? What if one State says that individuals
- 19 can marry at the age of puberty? So a 12-year-old
- 20 female can marry. Would a State -- would another State
- 21 be obligated to recognize that marriage?
- 22 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: I -- I think
- 23 probably not. But the State would have, in that
- 24 instance, a sufficiently important interest in
- 25 protecting the true consent of the married person.

- 1 And -- and most States don't recognize minors' ability
- 2 to consent, certainly not to something that is as
- 3 important as marriage.
- But what we see, in fact, is that, quite in
- 5 contrast to the non-recognition laws at issue here, the
- 6 States do recognize the marriages of person who, by age,
- 7 would not have been able to marry within their own
- 8 States.
- 9 That is the long-standing practice of all of
- 10 the States, precisely because of the abomination, as it
- 11 was referred to in the old treatises, of the notion that
- 12 a -- persons could have a different marital state in
- 13 some jurisdictions than others.
- 14 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Sir, how about the
- 15 co-sanguinity situation? Virtually all states would
- 16 recognize cousins through marriage getting married, but
- there's at least one State that doesn't; right?
- 18 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well, I --
- 19 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Are you saying that that
- 20 State is --
- 21 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: I think that
- 22 the -- that the constitutional test is the one that the
- 23 Court set forth in the Zablocki, which is does the State
- 24 have a sufficiently important interest not to recognize
- 25 it? And certainly in the case of incest, the State does

- 1 have a sufficiently important interest.
- 2 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: This is not incest.
- 3 They're not biologically tied.
- 4 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well, the States
- 5 that I'm aware of that have the rules against cousin
- 6 marriage do so under their incest statutes, and they
- 7 simply define incest in a broad way that would encompass
- 8 cousins to marry.
- 9 At some point, certainly the familial
- 10 relationship is too extenuated that I don't think the
- 11 State would have a sufficiently important justification.
- 12 JUSTICE KENNEDY: But Justice Alito's
- 13 question points out, the assumption of his hypothetical
- 14 is -- and -- and of the way these cases are presented,
- 15 is that the State does have a sufficient interest so
- 16 that you need not allow the marriages in those -- in
- 17 that State.
- 18 So there is a sufficient interest, under our
- 19 arguendo assumption here, to -- to say that this is not
- 20 a fundamental right. But then suddenly, if you're out
- 21 of State it's different. Why -- why should the State
- 22 have to yield?
- 23 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well, at the very
- least, you would have to analyze differently the
- 25 interest that the State might assert for not allowing

- 1 couples to enter marriage versus the -- the interest
- 2 that they assert as related to a couple who is already
- 3 married.
- 4 For example, Kentucky has asserted that its
- 5 interest in only permitting opposite-sex couples to
- 6 marry is to increase the birthrate. Well, now apply
- 7 that theory to same-sex couples who are already married.
- 8 They are already married in the States where they were
- 9 married. They are already married in half the States in
- 10 the country.
- 11 Kentucky would have the Court believe that
- 12 it is a sufficiently important interest to have that
- 13 couple disregard their existing marriage vows and
- 14 obligations to each other to marry someone else in
- 15 Kentucky in order to procreate biologically even though
- 16 the couple may already have children together. That, I
- 17 would dare say, is not a rational justification, much
- 18 less a sufficiently important one.
- 19 JUSTICE SCALIA: Well, I think -- I think
- 20 what Kentucky is saying is that the long-term effects of
- 21 having same-sex couples in Kentucky will be, which
- 22 you -- you didn't agree with, but what -- what counsel
- 23 for Respondent argued in the prior case, will be a -- a
- 24 reduction in -- in -- in heterosexual marriages and a --
- 25 a reduction in the number of children born to those

- 1 marriages. I mean, that --
- 2 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Your Honor, this
- 3 Court has rejected that type of speculation as a basis
- 4 for drawing these distinctions before as it did in
- 5 Loving.
- 6 The State in Loving argued that it was too
- 7 soon to know what the effect of interracial marriages
- 8 would be and what the stigma would be on their children
- 9 if not the biological --
- 10 JUSTICE SCALIA: But we will not have
- 11 rejected it if we come out the way this question
- 12 presented assumes we have come out.
- MR. HALLWARD-DREIMEIER: Well, the State --
- 14 JUSTICE SCALIA: Mainly, saying that it's
- okay for a State not to permit same-sex marriage.
- 16 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: The State asserts
- 17 that it has an interest in the -- the stability that
- 18 marriage provides for children. That interest does not
- 19 justify extinguishing marriages that already exist.
- 20 JUSTICE GINSBURG: May we clear this one
- 21 thing. If the Petitioner prevails in the first case,
- 22 then the argument is moot; right?
- 23 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: That's -- that's
- 24 absolutely right, Your Honor.
- 25 JUSTICE GINSBURG: So you are supposing a

- 1 situation where the Plaintiffs do not prevail, and so a
- 2 State can retain its ban on same-sex marriage.
- 3 The question is has -- does it have to
- 4 recognize marriage from out of State? Would it make any
- 5 difference if the couple came from the State where there
- 6 is a ban on same-sex marriage, goes to a neighboring
- 7 State that allows it, and then comes right back home
- 8 again?
- 9 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: No, Your Honor. I
- 10 don't think that there would be such a distinction.
- 11 And, in fact, none of these four States draws that kind
- 12 of line that Your Honor presupposes. And that's one of
- 13 the points that's so important here, is that as the
- 14 Court observed with respect to DOMA in Windsor, the
- 15 nonrecognition laws here are a stark departure from the
- 16 State's traditional practice of recognizing out-of-state
- 17 marriages even though they could not have been
- 18 celebrated within the State. It's precisely that
- 19 circumstance where the laws diverge that the issue
- 20 arises.
- 21 And the -- the three States that have this
- 22 issue, Tennessee, Ohio, and Kentucky, are, between them,
- 23 able to identify only 5 instances in which they did not
- 24 recognize a marriage that was valid outside the State,
- 25 even though it could not have been celebrated inside.

- 1 And those instances are incest, which we think the State
- 2 would have sufficiently important justification not to
- 3 recognize, miscegenation laws, not a precedent on which
- 4 I think the Court would want to rely in this instance,
- 5 or other interests that I think probably would not
- 6 survive today, such as the -- the rule against allowing
- 7 a divorced person to remarry.
- 8 So they're -- and -- and more importantly,
- 9 the most recent of those cases is from 1970. So the
- 10 rule that the States cite about their ability to
- 11 disregard, to effectively dissolve marriages that
- 12 already exist, around which people have already begun to
- 13 build their lives, is less applied than the Federal
- 14 government's own authority to define the --
- 15 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Yes. But, again, I
- 16 think you're avoiding the presumption on which we're
- 17 starting, on the assumption, which is that the State's
- 18 policy for same -- supporting same-sex marriage is
- 19 sufficiently strong, that they are -- they can, as a
- 20 matter of public policy, prohibit that in their own
- 21 State. And yet you're saying it's somehow so much
- 22 weaker when you're talking about marriages from other
- 23 States.
- 24 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: I -- I think there
- 25 are a couple of points that I'd like to make in order to

- 1 distinguish this situation from the -- the question in
- 2 the first case.
- 3 In the first case, it was very significant
- 4 that Respondents' counsel was emphasizing that he
- 5 thought it was merely rational basis scrutiny that would
- 6 apply. But that was to the question of whether people
- 7 should be allowed to marry in the first instance.
- 8 Our Petitioners on Question 2 are already
- 9 married. We know from Windsor, because the Court held,
- 10 that once married, a couple has a constitutionally
- 11 protected liberty interest in their marriage.
- 12 We also know from Windsor that where a -- a
- 13 sovereign disregards that marriage in a way that would
- 14 be extraordinary and out of character with tradition,
- 15 that that requires, at the very least, careful
- 16 consideration. And that's --
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: It certainly --
- 18 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: -- what we have
- 19 here.
- 20 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: It certainly
- 21 undermines the State interest that we would, assuming
- 22 arguendo, have recognized in the first case, to say that
- 23 they must welcome in their borders people who have been
- 24 married elsewhere. It'd simply be a matter of time
- 25 until they would, in effect, be recognizing that within

- 1 the State.
- 2 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well --
- 3 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Because we live in a
- 4 very mobile society, and people move all the time.
- 5 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: And -- and --
- 6 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: In other words, it
- 7 would kind of -- it -- one State would basically set the
- 8 policy for the entire nation.
- 9 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well, of course,
- 10 there would be many fewer such couples raising children
- 11 within their borders than heterosexual couples who are
- 12 raising children who are not biologically linked to
- 13 them.
- I have to say that I think that the
- 15 arguments that the State has made are so over and
- 16 underinclusive at the same time, that they leave the --
- 17 the feeling that it can only be pretext. And we know
- 18 that that's true, because the State not only can't draw
- 19 the lines that they are purporting to, they don't draw
- 20 the lines that they're -- would suggest, and they would
- 21 never draw the lines that they afford to --
- 22 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Wait. I -- I've
- 23 lost you there. What -- what lines are you talking
- 24 about?
- 25 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: A line, for

- 1 example, that limits marriage to those couples who are
- 2 able to procreate biologically without any assistance.
- 3 The States don't draw those lines. The States have laws
- 4 that treat adoptive relationships with the same legal
- 5 effect as biological ones. They actually have laws that
- 6 further support and -- and give greater stability --
- 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I thought your --
- 8 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: -- to marriages
- 9 that use --
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- your argument --
- 11 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: -- assisted
- 12 reproduction.
- 13 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- would be different.
- 14 I thought that the States had never categorically passed
- 15 a law declaring that a particular kind of marriage was
- 16 against public policy.
- 17 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: That -- that is
- 18 certainly another way in which --
- 19 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: No one of the four
- 20 States had ever done that?
- 21 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: They -- they have
- 22 never done that. They've never --
- 23 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Until the DOMA issue
- 24 came up.
- 25 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: That -- that --

- 1 these laws are -- are out of character, unprecedented in
- 2 the language of Romer in many respects.
- 3 JUSTICE ALITO: You're saying that --
- 4 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, they --
- 5 JUSTICE ALITO: You're saying that the laws
- 6 in some States, the States that you're referring to that
- 7 recognize only opposite-sex marriage are pretextual?
- 8 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: The -- their
- 9 -- their nonrecognition laws are pretextual, yes,
- 10 because the longstanding practice of these States is to
- 11 recognize marriages that are validly celebrated
- 12 elsewhere precisely because of --
- 13 JUSTICE ALITO: Well --
- 14 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: -- the
- 15 fundamental --
- 16 JUSTICE ALITO: -- other than the
- 17 distinction -- we have the distinction between same-sex
- 18 marriage and opposite-sex marriage. What is the next
- 19 most dramatic variation that exists in the marriage laws
- 20 of the States?
- MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well, at the time,
- 22 certainly interracial marriage when --
- 23 JUSTICE ALITO: At the present time, what
- 24 is --
- 25 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well --

- 1 JUSTICE ALITO: -- most -- the next most
- 2 dramatic difference?
- 3 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well, I -- I think
- 4 that, if I could, the -- the antimiscegenation laws
- 5 actually are the closest analogy, but what's different
- 6 between them, if I could -- because it goes to Justice
- 7 Sotomayor's question, and then I'll try to answer
- 8 yours -- is --
- 9 JUSTICE ALITO: Well -- well, I had asked a
- 10 simple question. At the present time, what is the next
- 11 most dramatic variation in the marriage laws of the
- 12 States?
- MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: It probably is age.
- 14 JUSTICE ALITO: And what is the -- what --
- 15 what's the range?
- 16 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: The -- the -- I
- 17 think it goes from 13 to 18. And -- but -- but as I
- 18 said before, the tradition of the States -- the issue
- 19 does not come up that much, but the tradition of the
- 20 States is to recognize a marriage that was entered into
- 21 by someone of an age that could not have been entered
- 22 within the State, because of the nature of the marriage
- 23 once it's established, recognizing that the fundamental
- 24 nature of that relationship is not one that the State
- 25 should put asunder.

- 1 JUSTICE ALITO: Well, I thought you answered
- 2 me earlier that a State could refuse to recognize a
- 3 marriage in -- contracted in another State where the
- 4 minimum age was puberty.
- 5 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well, they -- they
- 6 could, and I do believe that if, in the individual case,
- 7 it was shown that it was because of lack of consent,
- 8 the -- the State could decide not to recognize the
- 9 marriage. But with respect to the categorical nature --
- 10 JUSTICE GINSBURG: It would have to be
- 11 shown, I think, the presumption would be in such a
- 12 State that someone age 13 can't consent.
- MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: The age 13, I think
- 14 probably you're right, but if it is a matter of 15
- instead of 16, that the courts probably would recognize
- 16 it, especially if, in reliance on their marriage, the --
- 17 the couple had already conceived of a child, it would do
- 18 no one any good to destroy that marriage and the stable
- 19 environment that it might provide for the children, just
- 20 as it does no one any good -- it certainly doesn't
- 21 advance the interests of the children of opposite-sex
- 22 couples to destroy the marriages that provide stability
- 23 to the children of same-sex couples who are already
- 24 married under the laws of other States.
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: I think your -- your

- 1 argument is pretty much the exact opposite of the
- 2 argument of the Petitioners in the prior case. The
- 3 argument that was presented against them is, you can't
- 4 do this, we've never done this before, recognized
- 5 same-sex marriage.
- And now you're saying, well, they can't not
- 7 recognize same-sex marriages because they've never not
- 8 recognized marriages before that were lawfully performed
- 9 in other States.
- 10 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well, what --
- 11 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: You've got to decide
- 12 one or the other if you win.
- MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: No, I don't think
- 14 so at -- at all, Your Honor. And -- and I think that
- 15 what's -- what's essential and common between us is that
- 16 we recognize that the marriage that our Petitioners have
- 17 entered into is a marriage. It is that same
- 18 institution, that same most important relationship of
- 19 one's life that this Court has held out as
- 20 fundamental --
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: And maybe --
- 22 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: -- in other cases.
- 23 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: -- I'm just
- 24 repeating myself, but we only get to the second question
- 25 if you've lost on that point already, if we've said

- 1 States do not have to recognize same-sex marriage as a
- 2 marriage.
- 3 So assuming you've lost on that, I don't see
- 4 how your argument gets -- you can't say that they are
- 5 not treating the marriage as a marriage when they don't
- 6 have to do that in the first place.
- 7 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well, I -- I think
- 8 that that actually highlights one of the problems of
- 9 trying to decide the -- the two cases differently,
- 10 because, of course, deciding against Petitioners on
- 11 Question 1, even if the Court decides in favor of
- 12 Petitioners on Question 2, would forever relegate those
- 13 marriages to second class status and would raise all
- 14 kinds of questions whether those marriages could be
- 15 subjected to laws that are not quite so favorable as
- 16 opposite --
- 17 JUSTICE SCALIA: You're rearguing Question 1
- 18 now? Is that -- is that what you're doing?
- 19 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: No. No. I'm
- 20 suggesting, though --
- JUSTICE SCALIA: I thought you were.
- 22 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: -- that even a win
- 23 on Question 2 does not fully validate our Petitioners'
- 24 marriages, but certainly we think that the State cannot
- 25 disregard them -- cannot effectively dissolve existing

- 1 marriages without a sufficiently important reason for
- 2 doing so.
- 3 This Court recognized in the Lawrence case
- 4 that marriage, procreation, family relationships,
- 5 childrearing are fundamental aspects of autonomy that
- 6 same-sex couples can enter into, can choose for purposes
- of autonomy to the same extent as opposite-sex couples,
- 8 especially when those couples have done so, have
- 9 established a marriage, have brought children into --
- 10 I'd like to give an example, if I could, because I think
- 11 that it sort of brings home what's really happening.
- 12 Matthew Mansell and Johno Espejo married in
- 13 California in 2008. In 2009, they adopted two children.
- 14 Now, in reliance on the protection that is afforded by
- 15 marriage, Mr. Espejo was willing to give up his job to
- 16 give the primary caregiver of their children.
- 17 Mr. Mansell is the primary breadwinner. His job in an
- 18 international law firm was transferred from California
- 19 to Tennessee, and the cost of that transfer for that job
- 20 for them was the destruction of their family
- 21 relationships, all that they had relied on in building
- 22 their lives together.
- 23 And in support of that, the States offer
- 24 exactly nothing. There is no reason that the State
- 25 needs to disregard that marriage. No reason the State

- 1 needs to destroy the reliance that Mr. Espejo has had in
- 2 giving up his career to look after their children. They
- 3 are doing everything --
- 4 JUSTICE SCALIA: It would have been -- it
- 5 would have been the argument made with respect to the
- 6 first question; namely, that the existence of same-sex
- 7 marriages erodes, erodes the -- the feeling of society
- 8 regarding heterosexual marriages.
- 9 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: As I said -- as I
- 10 said before, Your Honor, I -- I don't think that that
- 11 holds up because opposite-sex couples who have no
- 12 children, who may be beyond childbearing years, when
- 13 they move into these States, their marriages are
- 14 entitled to respect, and yet they are situated precisely
- 15 as our Petitioners are. Our couples, likewise, have
- 16 marriages. They may not be able to procreate
- 17 biologically together, but they are able to procreate
- 18 through assisted means, through adoption. They bring
- 19 children into their families just as opposite-sex
- 20 couples do. And when, in reliance on their own State
- 21 where they live, they move into these States, that
- 22 marriage is destroyed.
- This Court relied on Federalism, the
- 24 vertical kind, in Windsor to identify something that was
- 25 highly unusual. In this case, it's horizontal

- 1 Federalism, I think, that identifies something that's
- 2 highly unusual. As part of a Federal form of government
- 3 in which the States are equal, the States have ceded
- 4 some form of their authority. And one is to -- to
- 5 recognize that when another State creates an enduring
- 6 relationship, encourages people to, in reliance on the
- 7 protections the law affords, to establish families, that
- 8 it is not that other States are simply free to disregard
- 9 that which those States have created.
- In the corporate context, once a corporation
- 11 is established under the laws of one State, that
- 12 corporation exists in all other States. Certainly, the
- 13 families that our Petitioners have established are
- 14 entitled to at least that same respect.
- 15 I think that, Your Honor, it is quite
- 16 interesting to note that in the first argument, Michigan
- 17 was forced to argue some positions that I think are
- 18 quite astonishing, that the State could limit marriage
- 19 to couples who are capable of procreation without
- 20 assistance or indeed, that it could abolish marriage
- 21 altogether.
- It's our clients who take marriage
- 23 seriously. They took vows to each other and bought into
- 24 an institution that, indeed, as this Court has said,
- 25 predates the Bill of Rights, that is the most important

- 1 and fundamental in their lives, and the State should
- 2 offer something more than mere pretext as ground to
- 3 destroy it.
- 4 JUSTICE GINSBURG: The State's rationale is
- 5 we -- we treat outsiders the same way we treat insiders.
- 6 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Well, thank you,
- 7 Your Honor. They -- they certainly have offered that,
- 8 but what the State ignores is that these so-called
- 9 outsiders are already married. The State, it's true,
- 10 says, well, we have same-sex couples in our State, and
- 11 we don't allow them to marry, so we're going to -- to
- 12 treat you the same way.
- 13 Well, they ignore that our clients have
- 14 already formed those relationships, and I think that it
- 15 would be, in terms of the interests that distinguish
- 16 between the two questions, it's -- it's helpful to think
- 17 again, perhaps, about heterosexual couples. We don't
- 18 think that a State could limit marriage to only those
- 19 couples who are capable of procreation. We don't think
- 20 it could preclude marriage by women who are 55, but it
- 21 would be quite a different and distinct constitutional
- 22 violation for the State to dissolve the marriages of
- 23 opposite-sex couples when the woman reaches 55.
- I don't think that that's constitutionally
- 25 permissible. The States don't do that and, of course,

- 1 they never would do that, because the essential
- 2 protection against arbitrary laws is that the majority
- 3 has to live under the same laws that they would subject
- 4 the minority to. And there is no chance that the
- 5 majority would subject themselves to such a law as that.
- 6 I'd like to reserve the remainder of my
- 7 time.
- 8 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- 9 Mr. Whalen.
- 10 ORAL ARGUMENT OF JOSEPH F. WHALEN
- ON BEHALF OF THE RESPONDENTS ON QUESTION 2
- MR. WHALEN: Mr. Chief Justice, and may it
- 13 please the Court:
- 14 The Fourteenth Amendment does not require
- 15 States with traditional marriage laws to recognize
- 16 marriages from other States between two persons of the
- 17 same sex.
- 18 JUSTICE SCALIA: What about Article IV? I'm
- 19 so glad to be able to quote a portion of the
- 20 Constitution that actually seems to be relevant. "Full
- 21 faith and credit shall be given in each State to the
- 22 public acts, records, and judicial proceedings of every
- 23 other State." Now, why doesn't that apply?
- 24 MR. WHALEN: Your Honor, this Court's cases
- 25 have made clear that the Court draws a distinction

- 1 between judgments between States and the laws of each
- 2 State. And the reason in part that the Court's
- 3 decisions have said that is that otherwise, each State
- 4 would be able to essentially legislate for every other
- 5 State.
- 6 JUSTICE SCALIA: Public acts? It would
- 7 include the act of marrying people, I assume.
- 8 MR. WHALEN: My understanding of this
- 9 Court's decisions as the reference in the Constitution
- 10 to public acts is that each State's laws.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: So there -- there's nothing
- in the Constitution that requires a State to acknowledge
- 13 even those marriages in other States that -- that are
- 14 the same.
- 15 MR. WHALEN: That's essentially correct,
- 16 Your Honor.
- 17 JUSTICE SCALIA: Really?
- 18 MR. WHALEN: Under this Court's decisions,
- 19 that's -- that's essentially right. There has been
- 20 under the jurisprudence with regard to Allstate
- 21 Insurance and Alaska Packers and so forth that
- 22 there's -- there's a minimal due process requirement to
- 23 decline to apply another State's substantive law.
- JUSTICE SCALIA: We -- we can say the only
- 25 marriages we acknowledge in -- in New York are marriages

- 1 concluded in New York; is that possible?
- 2 MR. WHALEN: I'm sorry? I don't --
- 3 JUSTICE SCALIA: New York can say the only
- 4 marriages we acknowledge in New York are those marriages
- 5 that have been made under the laws of New York.
- 6 MR. WHALEN: Yes, Your Honor.
- 7 JUSTICE SCALIA: Really?
- 8 MR. WHALEN: If I'm understanding your -- if
- 9 I'm understanding your question correctly.
- 10 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: What case is that?
- 11 What case would you cite to support that proposition?
- 12 MR. WHALEN: I'm not sure if I understood
- 13 the question correctly, Your Honor.
- 14 JUSTICE BREYER: He said -- I mean, I
- 15 already have several cases to read. I might as well get
- 16 another one.
- 17 (Laughter.)
- 18 JUSTICE BREYER: What -- what is the case
- 19 that holds that the State of New York has the right to
- 20 recognize only marriages made in New York? And when --
- 21 if you marry in Virginia, New York has the
- 22 constitutional right to say, we treat you as if you
- 23 weren't married, whoever you are.
- MR. WHALEN: I did -- I did misunderstand
- 25 the question. My understanding of the question was

- 1 whether New York could decline to recognize an
- 2 out-of-state marriage that did not comport with New
- 3 York's law.
- 4 JUSTICE SCALIA: That's not what I said.
- 5 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Because it is clear that
- 6 if the law of the two States is the same, that was used
- 7 against Fedder, the State cannot say we won't apply the
- 8 other State's law, even though it's the same as our own.
- 9 MR. WHALEN: Even though it's the same as
- 10 ours?
- 11 JUSTICE GINSBURG: Yes.
- 12 JUSTICE BREYER: Like New York. For
- 13 example, I happen to know has a law that a Federal judge
- 14 from Washington couldn't marry someone. I mean, you can
- 15 get married to your own wife, et cetera, but you can't
- 16 marry two other people, but the District of Columbia has
- 17 the opposite law. So if I marry two people in
- 18 Washington D.C. and they happen to move to New York, you
- 19 are saying that New York doesn't have to recognize that
- 20 marriage because it doesn't comport with the marriage of
- 21 New York; is that your point?
- 22 MR. WHALEN: Yes, Your Honor. I think
- 23 that's --
- JUSTICE BREYER: And then what case says
- 25 that? I think there are a few people going to get

- 1 nervous about this.
- 2 (Laughter.)
- 3 MR. WHALEN: My -- my answer is based on
- 4 essentially this Court's decision in Nevada v. Hall,
- 5 because the State's own law sets its own policy and the
- 6 other State's law would be in conflict with that State's
- 7 policy.
- 8 JUSTICE BREYER: But here the policy would
- 9 be we distrust Federal judges from outside the State.
- 10 And even that, they would get away with, in your view,
- 11 because I'm next going to ask, and what is the
- 12 difference between that kind of policy and the policy
- 13 that says, well, we don't recognize the gay couple's
- 14 marriage for the reason that we fear that if gay couples
- 15 get married, even if they have children and adopt them,
- 16 and even if we allow people who are not gay to get
- 17 married and they don't have children, despite all that,
- 18 this policy, which I've had a little trouble
- 19 understanding, warrants not recognizing it? Did you
- 20 follow that question? It was a little complicated.
- 21 MR. WHALEN: I -- I probably did not, but
- 22 I'm going to try to answer. I -- I think the underlying
- 23 focus is not just that there's a policy, but that
- there's a legitimate policy. And as this Court's
- 25 questions earlier indicated, I proceed now on the

- 1 assumption that the Court has decided the first question
- 2 in the State's favor, and is determined that, indeed,
- 3 the State's policy to maintain a traditional man-woman
- 4 definition of marriage is, indeed, legitimate, and we
- 5 obviously agree that it is, and the Court should so
- 6 decide. So --
- 7 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So you don't see --
- 8 JUSTICE SCALIA: But none of this has
- 9 anything to do with Article IV, right? None of this has
- 10 anything to do with Article IV? Full faith and credit,
- 11 right?
- 12 MR. WHALEN: It -- full faith and credit
- 13 provides the background for the -- for the States to be
- 14 able to assert that, indeed, we have the right to
- 15 decline to recognize the out-of-state marriage based on
- 16 the out-of-state --
- 17 JUSTICE GINSBURG: You're --
- 18 MR. WHALEN: -- law --
- 19 JUSTICE GINSBURG: You're making a
- 20 distinction between judgments -- full faith and credit
- 21 applies to judgments. You can't reject a judgment from
- 22 a sister State because you find it offensive to your
- 23 policy, but --
- 24 MR. WHALEN: Yes, Your Honor.
- 25 JUSTICE GINSBURG: -- full faith and credit

- 1 has never been interpreted to apply to choice of law.
- 2 MR. WHALEN: Yes, Your Honor.
- JUSTICE GINSBURG: That -- that's the
- 4 distinction.
- 5 MR. WHALEN: Yes, Your Honor. And -- and
- 6 so, in -- in essence, by deciding whether or not to
- 7 recognize another State's marriage, the -- the State is
- 8 deciding whether or not to recognize the other State's
- 9 law under which that marriage was performed.
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I'm sorry. You don't
- 11 see a fundamental difference between creating a marriage
- 12 and recognizing a marriage? You don't think there's any
- 13 difference in terms of the rights of people? If States
- 14 regularly don't say that the prerequisites to marriage
- in our State are not necessarily against public
- 16 policy -- and they have said it for age differences,
- 17 they have said it for a lot of things, why -- why would
- 18 the gay marriage issue be so fundamental that that can
- 19 lead them to exclude a whole category of people from
- 20 recognition?
- 21 MR. WHALEN: It goes, Your Honor, to the
- 22 essence of what I think, in fact, both -- both questions
- 23 before the Court today get at. And that is that -- the
- 24 fundamental notion of what marriage is. And -- and let
- 25 me answer the question, if I could, in this way. The --

- 1 the comparison between how States have operated with
- 2 regard to recognizing or not recognizing marriages
- 3 before, in other words, before there was any idea of
- 4 same-sex marriage, can't be compared at all to how
- 5 States are responding across the board with regard to
- 6 the phenomenon of same-sex marriage.
- 7 And here's the reason: Commentators have
- 8 observed that when all States are on the same page about
- 9 what marriage is, that's where the place of celebration
- 10 rule evolved from, that every State had the same
- 11 definition. Every State shared the same interest, and
- 12 so there was a liberal policy of recognizing marriages
- 13 from one State to the other because --
- 14 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: You think marriage --
- 15 JUSTICE SCALIA: That's just not --
- 16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- decrees are closer to
- 17 laws?
- MR. WHALEN: I'm sorry?
- 19 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: You think marriage
- 20 decrees are closer to laws than they are to judgments?
- 21 MR. WHALEN: I do --
- 22 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I mean, you need to get
- 23 a judgment to divorce. And I think that, in my mind,
- 24 that makes the decree much closer to a judgment than it
- 25 does to a law.

- 1 MR. WHALEN: I -- I think that the -- the
- 2 performing of a marriage is closer to law is because, in
- 3 essence, when the marriage is performed, all the rights
- 4 that flow from that State's laws evolve to that couple.
- 5 And it's different than judgments and so does not
- 6 deserve the same kind of treatment that judgments would,
- 7 under the full faith and credit jurisprudence, because
- 8 of the reason that this Court drawn that distinction.
- 9 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So what is an order
- 10 under the Constitution, or --
- 11 MR. WHALEN: I --
- 12 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- an act under the
- 13 Constitution that's not a judgment?
- 14 MR. WHALEN: I didn't catch the first part
- 15 of your question, Your Honor.
- 16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: How do you separate out
- 17 the terms that Justice Scalia gave you? They're not all
- 18 judgments.
- 19 MR. WHALEN: No. I -- I --
- 20 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Three different terms
- 21 were used, or four different terms were used.
- 22 MR. WHALEN: Acts, records, and judicial
- 23 proceedings is what I understand --
- 24 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Acts --
- 25 MR. WHALEN: -- what I recall and that --

JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: -- records --1 2 MR. WHALEN: And my understanding of the 3 Court's jurisprudence has been that that refers to laws 4 and records and judgments of another State. And 5 marriages have always been treated as a conflict of law 6 matter throughout all the years -- in fact, it -- it 7 gives rise to the entire conflict of law doctrine on -on which Petitioners rely here, which is Joseph Story's 8 9 Commentaries -- Commentaries on the Conflict of Laws. CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: 10 This second -outside of the present controversy, when was the last 11 12 time Tennessee declined to recognize a marriage from out 13 of state? 14 MR. WHALEN: Any marriage, Your Honor? 15 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Any marriage. 1970 is the last one that I 16 MR. WHALEN: 17 could point to. That involved a stepfather and stepdaughter. 18 19 I would -- I would hasten to add, though, 20 because of where -- what I was starting to describe with 21 regard to how we got to this point, while -- while 22 States were all playing along under the same definition 23 of marriage, what they confronted in an unprecedented 24 fashion was some States changing the rules of the game,

if I can extend the metaphor, and so --

25

- 1 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, but they
- 2 weren't playing along with the same definition. There
- 3 have always been distinctions based on age and family
- 4 relationship. So they weren't playing along under the
- 5 same definition. And still, despite that, it apparently
- 6 is quite rare for a State not to recognize an
- 7 out-of-state marriage.
- 8 MR. WHALEN: It -- it was and is quite rare,
- 9 so long as we're talking about what marriage is, so long
- 10 as we're talking about the fundamental man and woman
- 11 marriage. And that -- and that's my point, is that as
- 12 soon as States were confronted with the reality that
- 13 some States were going to redefine marriage or expand
- 14 the definition of marriage to include same-sex couples
- 15 for the first time, then it's unsurprising that they
- 16 would determine, in keeping with their own laws, that
- 17 they would not recognize those other States' marriages
- 18 in -- in Tennessee.
- 19 JUSTICE ALITO: This second question puts
- 20 both you and Mr. Hallward-Driemeier in a very unusual
- 21 situation, because, first of all, we have to assume that
- 22 this first question has been decided against the
- 23 Petitioner, or we wouldn't get to the second question.
- So we have to assume that we would hold that
- 25 a State has a sufficient reason for limiting marriage to

- 1 opposite-sex couples. And Mr. Hallward-Driemeier
- 2 acknowledged that a State could refuse to recognize an
- 3 out-of-state marriage if it has a very strong public
- 4 policy against that marriage, if it's a polygamous
- 5 marriage, if it's a -- a marriage of very young
- 6 individuals.
- 7 So the question is whether there could be
- 8 something in between. So there -- there's a -- a
- 9 sufficient reason to -- for the State to say, we're not
- 10 going to grant these licenses ourselves, but not a
- 11 strong enough reason for us not to recognize a marriage
- 12 performed out of state. I suppose that's possible,
- 13 isn't it?
- MR. WHALEN: Well, let me answer it this
- 15 way, and hopefully I'll -- I'm answering your question
- 16 in doing so. Let me be clear. The -- the
- 17 justifications that have grown over time and the
- 18 requirement for a strong public policy reason to decline
- 19 to recognize a marriage have grown up around the
- 20 man-woman definition.
- Our position is that so long as we're
- 22 talking about a marriage from another State that is not
- 23 the man-woman definition, that it is simply the State's
- 24 interest in maintaining a cohesive and a coherent
- 25 internal State policy with regard to marriage that

- 1 justifies not recognizing those marriages.
- Otherwise, as -- as the question that was
- 3 put earlier indicated, any resident of the State could
- 4 go to another State, get married, come back and demand
- 5 to have their -- their marriage recognized.
- 6 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: That happens already.
- 7 People who are not permitted to be married in a lot of
- 8 States go and do that, and they come back to their home
- 9 States, and the home States follow the rule of marriage
- 10 celebration.
- 11 MR. WHALEN: And -- and, again, we're
- 12 talking about the fundamental distinction between
- 13 marriage as the States see it, the traditional
- 14 definition, and the same-sex marriages that other
- 15 States have --
- 16 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Well, they have --
- 17 MR. WHALEN: -- have adopted.
- 18 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: The prerequisites are
- 19 always a State's judgment about marriage, about what
- 20 should be a recognized marriage.
- 21 MR. WHALEN: But, Your Honor, the -- the --
- 22 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: They make exceptions.
- 23 MR. WHALEN: -- the difference here, I
- 24 think, is -- is the -- the landscape that we find
- 25 ourselves in. Tennessee, Ohio, Kentucky, and other

- 1 States with a traditional definition of marriage have
- 2 done nothing here but stand pat. They have maintained
- 3 the status quo. And yet other States have made the
- 4 decision, and it certainly is their right and
- 5 prerogative to do so, to expand the definition, to
- 6 redefine the definition, and then to suggest that other
- 7 States that have done nothing but stand pat now must
- 8 recognize those marriages imposes a substantial burden
- 9 on the State's ability to self-govern.
- 10 JUSTICE GINSBURG: It is -- it is odd, isn't
- 11 it, that a divorce does become the decree for the
- 12 nation? A divorce with proper jurisdiction in one State
- 13 must be recognized by every other State, but not the act
- 14 of marriage.
- 15 MR. WHALEN: I -- I understand the point,
- 16 Your Honor, and, again, I think it falls within the
- 17 Court's recognition of a distinction between judgments
- 18 and laws. And here I think we're dealing only with
- 19 laws, and, again, it would allow one State initially --
- 20 literally one State, and now, a minority of States to
- 21 legislate fundamental State concern about marriage for
- 22 every other State quite literally. That's -- that's an
- 23 enormous imposition and an intrusion upon the State's
- 24 ability to decide for itself important public policy
- 25 questions and to maintain -- particularly when you're

- 1 talking about recognition. There -- there is an impact
- 2 that occurs when one State is asked to recognize another
- 3 State's same-sex marriage because of the fact that its
- 4 entire domestic relations policy has been built around
- 5 the expectation and the presumption that there is a
- 6 man-woman relationship. That -- in Windsor, this Court
- 7 recognized and observed that marriage is the foundation
- 8 of the State's ability to regulate domestic relations.
- 9 And to give you one concrete example that
- 10 is -- that it comes up in this case itself. One of the
- 11 incidents of marriage is the child -- the presumption of
- 12 parentage that comes with a marriage. And for the State
- 13 to be required to recognize another State's marriage
- 14 where there is a child of that marriage in a same-sex
- 15 situation would fundamentally alter the State's
- 16 definition of parentage, which I can tell you --
- 17 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Well, I don't
- 18 understand your argument. I understand your argument
- 19 that it's a fundamental public policy question about
- 20 whether you're going to recognize same-sex marriage or
- 21 not. But I don't see the difficulty in following the
- 22 consequences of that under domestic relations law as
- 23 treating a couple as married. And it -- and so the
- 24 first question is a big step, but after that, it seems
- 25 to me that the question of how you apply the domestic

- 1 relations law is pretty straightforward.
- 2 MR. WHALEN: Well, it -- that's part of the
- 3 reason why I wanted to mention this in particular
- 4 because a large part of the Petitioners' focus has been
- 5 on the impact on the children that are involved.
- 6 And -- and I think it's important for the Court to
- 7 recognize that in many States -- and I can tell you in
- 8 Tennessee that the definition of parent has always been
- 9 biologically-based. That marital presumption of
- 10 parentage has its foundation in biology. It has its
- 11 foundation in the man-woman relationship.
- 12 So when and if a State were required to
- 13 recognize a same-sex marriage and so therefore, change
- 14 the pronouns and change the terminology to apply --
- 15 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Oh, but you do that for
- 16 adoptions. What's -- what's the problem?
- 17 MR. WHALEN: Because --
- 18 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: This -- this is a really
- 19 big deal?
- 20 MR. WHALEN: It -- it is a big deal, Your
- 21 Honor, because you are changing the way the State
- 22 defines a parent. And in the adoption context, you have
- 23 to understand adoption and the traditional definition
- 24 of -- of marriage, they work in tandem. They work
- 25 together. And as Mr. Bursch described, the objective

- 1 with regard to marriage is to link children with their
- 2 biological parents. When that breaks down, then there's
- 3 adoption. And so yes, there's an effort to --
- 4 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Do you think that a
- 5 State can fail to recognize the birth certificate of a
- 6 particular -- another State?
- 7 MR. WHALEN: I'm not --
- 8 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Just that. Do you think
- 9 the word "records" in the Constitution includes birth
- 10 certificates?
- MR. WHALEN: Yes.
- 12 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: So California without
- 13 any reason, no suspicion of fraud, no anything, could it
- 14 refuse to recognize another State's birth certificate?
- 15 MR. WHALEN: I -- I have to admit, Your
- 16 Honor, I -- I can't speak to that intelligently.
- 17 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: Records to me has to
- 18 have a meaning.
- 19 MR. WHALEN: Record has a meaning. It does,
- 20 Your Honor. The reason that I'm hesitant is that I know
- 21 that there -- there is disagreement in the -- in the
- 22 cases about exactly what the impact of that is between
- 23 whether that just means we have to acknowledge the
- 24 existence of the record for the evidentiary purposes, or
- 25 whether the effect of the record has to be acknowledged.

- 1 And as I stand here I can't speak to it.
- 2 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: I recognize that that's
- 3 an issue.
- 4 MR. WHALEN: Yes, Your Honor.
- 5 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: But if a birth
- 6 certificate were to be a record, don't you think a
- 7 marriage certificate -- it's an official act of a State.
- 8 MR. WHALEN: Well, the -- the marriage
- 9 certificate --
- 10 JUSTICE SOTOMAYOR: As a record.
- 11 MR. WHALEN: -- certifies -- and I quess it
- 12 goes exactly to the point. It certifies the fact that
- 13 there was a marriage. I think that the laws that
- 14 allowed that marriage to occur, when they are different
- 15 fundamentally with the laws of a State like Tennessee,
- 16 preclude the application of that same principle from one
- 17 State to the other.
- 18 With regard to the effect of requiring
- 19 recognition on a State, I think it's important also to
- 20 consider the fact that the Petitioners have complained
- 21 about the impact that it has when they move from one
- 22 State to the next with regard to the rights that they
- 23 enjoyed under the marriage as it was defined in New
- 24 York, for example, or California.
- 25 Federalism accommodates this situation. It

- 1 is the strength of our Federal structure to accommodate
- 2 the very difference of viewpoint and the very difference
- 3 in approach that this fundamental debate that we're
- 4 having about same-sex marriage generates. And so it
- 5 makes all the sense in the world, with respect to that,
- 6 to allow the Federal structure to do what it was
- 7 designed to do and to accommodate those different points
- 8 of view. And that is why we asked the Court to
- 9 determine that the Fourteenth Amendment does not come in
- 10 and then disrupt that balance and impose a duty on one
- 11 State to recognize the laws and recognize the marriage
- 12 of a different State because of the intrusion that it
- 13 would have on that State's public policy.
- 14 JUSTICE KAGAN: Mr. Whalen, just a quick
- 15 question.
- 16 MR. WHALEN: Yes, Your Honor.
- 17 JUSTICE KAGAN: You -- you acknowledge that
- 18 if the State loses on the first question, then the State
- 19 also loses on the second question? It's a fortiori?
- 20 That's --
- MR. WHALEN: I do, Your Honor.
- JUSTICE KAGAN: Okay.
- 23 MR. WHALEN: Yes, Your Honor. If there are
- 24 no further questions, we ask you to affirm.
- 25 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.

- 1 MR. WHALEN: Thank you.
- 2 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS:
- 3 Mr. Hallward-Driemeier, you have five minutes left.
- 4 REBUTTAL ARGUMENT OF DOUGLAS HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER
- 5 ON BEHALF OF THE PETITIONERS ON QUESTION 2
- 6 MR. HALLWARD-DRIEMEIER: Thank you, Your
- 7 Honor.
- 8 If I may start with the assertion that
- 9 Tennessee law has always rooted parental relations in
- 10 biology, that is not so. Tennessee law -- and I'm going
- 11 to quote from chapter 361.1. -- I mean -- sorry. It's
- 12 68.3.306 referred to on page 15 of our reply. It
- 13 provides that a child born to a married woman as a
- 14 result of an artificial insemination with consent of the
- 15 married woman's husband, the father is deemed the
- 16 legitimate child of the husband and wife, though the
- 17 husband has no biological relationship with the child.
- 18 Tennessee, in other words, just as it does
- 19 with adoption, reinforces the bonds of parent and child
- 20 irregardless of biology, as long as the -- a
- 21 parent -- or as long as the couple is of opposite sexes.
- The import of that for real people, like
- 23 Drs. Tanco and Jesty, is that they, who fell in love and
- 24 married while in graduate school in New York, as many
- 25 academic couples, were only able to find a position at a

- 1 same university in Tennessee. They moved there, and
- 2 Dr. Tanco has given birth to their daughter in
- 3 Tennessee.
- 4 Now, as a result of the nonrecognition laws,
- 5 when, as occurred last week, their daughter is
- 6 hospitalized, Tennessee would treat Dr. Jesty not as
- 7 mom, but as a legal stranger with no right to visit her
- 8 child, no right to make medical decisions for her.
- 9 These laws have real import for real people.
- 10 And although, I think that counsel was suggesting that
- 11 Federalism and allowing States to make different laws,
- 12 if you choose to get married in your State, just don't
- 13 move to ours. That's the cost of Federalism.
- 14 Well, Sergeant Dekoe and his husband,
- 15 Mr. Kostura, didn't have a choice. The United States
- 16 Army moved them to Tennessee, and given the location of
- 17 Army bases in this country, it's almost a certainty that
- 18 anyone serving in the Army for any length of time will
- 19 be stationed at some point in a State that would
- 20 dissolve their marriage as a matter of State law.
- I want to get back, Justice Sotomayor, to
- 22 your comment about categorical and how unprecedented it
- 23 is, because even in the age of antimiscegenation laws,
- 24 the States would give effect, for some purposes,
- 25 interracial marriages such as for purposes of estate,

- 1 giving out the -- the proceeds after a death or -- or
- 2 otherwise.
- 3 Here, however, the State statutes provide
- 4 that a marriage shall be given no effect for any reason.
- 5 Even Jim Obergefell's husband's death certificate will
- 6 not reflect the fact that he was married or the name of
- 7 his husband. The State has no legitimate interest for
- 8 denying them the dignity of that last fact regarding his
- 9 life.
- 10 The real import of the State's argument is,
- 11 I believe, this: That even when same-sex couples are
- 12 married, they are not, in their view, married for
- 13 constitutional purposes; that the States can
- 14 discriminate against these marriages even in ways that
- 15 the Constitution would not permit the States to
- 16 disregard the marriages of opposite-sex couples.
- I urge the Court not to enshrine in our
- 18 Constitution a second-class status of these Petitioners'
- 19 marriages.
- Thank you very much.
- 21 CHIEF JUSTICE ROBERTS: Thank you, counsel.
- 22 Case is submitted.
- 23 (Whereupon, at 12:29 p.m., the case in the
- 24 above-entitled matter was submitted.)

25

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