1.1 Million LGBT Adults Are Married to Someone of the Same Sex at the Two-Year Anniversary of Obergefell v. Hodges

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Two years ago, on June 26, 2015, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Obergefell v. Hodges that the Constitution guarantees same-sex couples the right to marry and to have their marriages recognized by the states.1 And four years ago, on June 26, 2013, the Court ruled in United States v. Windsor that the federal government must recognize marriages between same-sex couples.2 This research brief shows:

• As of June 2017, nearly 1.1 million LGBT people in the United States are married to someone of the same sex, implying that more than 547,000 same-sex couples are married nationwide.
• Since Obergefell, at least 157,000 same-sex couples married.
• Since Windsor, at least 317,000 same-sex couples married.

New data from the Gallup Daily Tracking Survey—a nationally-representative survey that includes a measure of LGBT identity—indicate that 4.3% of adults in the United States identify as LGBT.3 Data from the U.S. Census Bureau indicate that there are more than 249 million U.S. adults.4 Applying the LGBT percentage from Gallup to the Census population data indicates that more than 10.7 million adults in the United States identify as LGBT. The Gallup data indicate that 10.2% of LGBT adults are married to someone of the same sex,5 implying that currently nearly 1.1 million LGBT adults are members of more than 547,000 same-sex marriages.

Gates and Newport (2015) estimated that there were 390,000 married same-sex couples in the United States just prior to the Supreme Court’s decision in Obergefell.6 Thus, since June 2015, at least 157,000 same-sex couples married in the United States.7 In 2013, the year that the Supreme Court decided Windsor, an estimated 230,000 same-sex couples were married.8 Thus, since 2013, at least 317,000 same-sex couples married in the United States.

5 Jones, supra note 3.
7 Some number of same-sex couples divorced or otherwise dissolved their marriages (e.g., death of spouse) in the time period analyzed in this brief. The estimates in this brief of the number of same-sex couples who have married since Obergefell and since Windsor, however, do not account for these divorces/dissolutions or the corresponding number of new marriages that offset these divorces/dissolutions in the sample.