

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia: Madam Speaker, I rise today to commemorate a milestone in the struggle for equality and civil rights. On this day 41 years ago, the Supreme Court ruled that the United States would no longer allow race-based restrictions on marriage to deprive Americans of their rights.

Today, on the anniversary of the Supreme Court's decision in *Loving v. Virginia*, we are once again reminded that America is a place of equality and freedom.

As an interracial couple, Mildred and Richard Loving challenged laws in effect in Virginia and 15 other states which prohibited interracial marriage. On June 12, 1967 the Supreme Court recognized the merits of Mr. and Mrs. Loving's claims and overturned all race-based restrictions on marriage.

The Court ruled unanimously that Virginia's prohibition against interracial marriage violated both the Due Process Clause and the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. In its decision, the Court held that, "The Fourteenth Amendment requires that the freedom of choice to marry not be restricted by invidious racial discrimination. Under our Constitution, the freedom to marry, or not marry, a person of another race resides with the individual and cannot be infringed by the State."

On this day, I would like to celebrate the lives and audacity of both Mr. and Mrs. Loving, whose vision paved the way for a freer and more colorblind society in America. Richard Loving died in a car accident in 1975 and we lost Mildred Loving to pneumonia only last month. It is the courage and the spirit of the Lovings and others like them that continue to give us hope that Americans from all walks of life will be free from discrimination.

There have been recent efforts in Congress to strip the courts of jurisdiction by legislative means. This is ill-advisable and I hope the example of *Loving v. Virginia* serves as a reminder to us all that this is a precarious path. Should the Court have been stripped of jurisdiction to hear this case, as some have proposed for certain controversial issues, this landmark case would have never been possible. What was once highly controversial is now accepted as commonplace thanks to those judges who were, at the time, disparaged for being "activist

judges". Today we are a better, stronger and fairer nation thanks to their jurisprudence.

I would also like to pay tribute to a colleague and friend who played an integral part in the *Loving v. Virginia* case. I had the honor of serving with Attorney Bernard S. Cohen in the Virginia House of Delegates for 3 years.

As Mr. and Mrs. Loving's attorney, Mr. Cohen worked tirelessly for the protection of the Fourteenth Amendment, and

I think it is appropriate to recognize him
for all of his efforts and his commitment to civil rights

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Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join with me in remembering this historic case, and urge our nation to keep in mind the equality and freedom for which the Court's decision stands.