

## Robert Mari

I know that this is geared towards hearing opinions of residents of Jersey and citizens of Her Majesty's government.

During the summer of 2011, the New York state legislature voted to legalize same sex marriage. This was four years prior to the ruling handed down by the United States Supreme Court.

I thought it might be interesting to understand what changed, what didn't and the overall implications of the ruling on the people of New York.

What changed: A new group was given the right to marry which allowed for an economic boost in the days following the Great Recession and many new opportunities economically began to emerge. Citizens who identified as LGBT were now much more likely to become active in the community and happiness index of these groups dramatically increased. Marriage rights also allowed for these groups to have legal protections that were not previously allocated.

What didn't change: One of the main concerns was this would lead to the dissolution of the family. This was inaccurate and divorce rates remained steady from previous reports. There were also concerns regarding religious liberties. No church was forced to perform marriages nor were forced to close based on opposing views. Society went on like it always had.

I implore Jersey to join the more than 24 countries and their territories who have so far joined a growing network of places that protect the rights of LGBT citizens and extend marriage protections.

-Robert Mari