

114TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

To amend title 17, United States Code, with respect to the definition of  
“widow” and “widower”, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, and  
Mr. FRANKEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and  
referred to the Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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**A BILL**

To amend title 17, United States Code, with respect to  
the definition of “widow” and “widower”, and for other  
purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Copyright and Mar-  
5 riage Equality Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITION OF WIDOW AND WIDOWER IN TITLE 17,**  
2 **UNITED STATES CODE.**

3 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—Section 101 of title 17, United  
4 States Code, is amended by striking the definition of  
5 “‘widow’ or ‘widower’” and inserting the following:

6 “An individual is the ‘widow’ or ‘widower’ of an  
7 author if the courts of the State in which the indi-  
8 vidual and the author were married (or, if the indi-  
9 vidual and the author were not married in any State  
10 but were validly married in another jurisdiction, the  
11 courts of any State) would find that the individual  
12 and the author were validly married at the time of  
13 the author’s death, whether or not the spouse has  
14 later remarried.”.

15 (b) **EFFECTIVE DATE.**—The amendment made by  
16 subsection (a) shall apply with respect to the death of any  
17 author that occurs on or after the date of the enactment  
18 of this Act.