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April 12, 2017 at 4:31 pm EDT | by Lou Chibbaro Jr.

# D.C. surrogacy bill becomes law



*Under the city's antiquated surrogacy law that the new law replaces, all parties to surrogacy agreements that are legal in nearly every state were subject to a fine of up to \$10,000 and a one-year prison sentence.*

After four years in the making, a bill ending D.C.'s longstanding criminalization of surrogacy parenting and establishing a legal framework for surrogacy agreements became law on April 7 upon completion of a required congressional review.

The D.C. City Council gave final approval of the legislation, the Collaborative Reproduction Amendment Act of 2015, last December. An earlier version of the bill had been introduced in 2013 and a revised version in 2015 became stalled in the Council's Judiciary Committee until the committee released the bill to the full Council last November.

Under the city's antiquated surrogacy law that the new law replaces, all parties to surrogacy agreements that are legal in nearly every state were subject to a fine of up to \$10,000 and a one-year prison sentence.

LGBT rights organizations were part of a coalition of civil liberties and reproductive rights organizations and advocates that urged the Council to pass the new law.

"The District has a track record of being a national leader in providing equal rights for all its residents," said Diane Hinson, owner and founder of Creative Family Connections LLC, a Chevy Chase, Md., based law firm that provides surrogacy related services.

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"It was one of the first jurisdictions to permit same-sex couples to marry," she said. "Yet its antiquated surrogacy law has impeded their ability to have children."

The D.C. law establishes guidelines for parents and surrogates to enter into surrogacy agreements and spells out how those seeking to become parents, including gay male couples, should establish their parental rights.

"It is a great day for reproductive rights that the nation's capital now allows all parents to build their families through surrogacy," Hinson told the Blade in an email. "It's a good day for surrogacy in general and for rights in general and for LGBT reproductive rights in particular."

CHEVY CHASE COLLABORATIVE REPRODUCTION AMENDMENT ACT OF 2015  
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### Lou Chibbaro Jr.

Lou Chibbaro Jr. has reported on the LGBT civil rights movement and the LGBT community for more than 30 years, beginning as a freelance writer and later as a staff reporter and currently as Senior News Reporter for the Washington Blade. He has chronicled LGBT-related developments as they have touched on a wide range of social, religious, and governmental institutions, including the White House, Congress, the U.S. Supreme Court, the military, local and national law enforcement agencies and the Catholic Church. Chibbaro has reported on LGBT issues and LGBT participation in local and national elections since 1976. He has covered the AIDS epidemic since it first surfaced in the early 1980s. Follow Lou

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