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OPINION

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A partner's tribute

A marriage equality bill was actually passed by both houses of the New Jersey Legislature in February 2012 but was vetoed by Gov. Chris Christie.

Less than two months later, after a yearlong struggle with cancer, my partner Carol passed into eternity. We were together for 10 years. We raised children, volunteered in the community and voted. As homeowners and workers we paid thousands of dollars in state and federal taxes.

Over the past year, I have become acquainted with several bereaved gay men and women who had recently lost a partner due to illness. When speaking about the urgent need for justice during the civil rights struggle, Martin Luther King once said: "There is such a thing as being too late."

Eleven months after my loss, I am uplifted to see the marriage equality debate has reached the U.S. Supreme Court. I want to send my blessings to the activists whose courage and dedication have brought us closer to equality and to fairness. In honor of my partner's memory, I declare what I know to be true: The love we share is sacred.

In my heart I feel certain that Carol would be proud.

Sharleen Leahey, Somerville