

Oregon files brief with court against Colorado's anti-gay law

■ **RIGHTS:** Six other states urged Supreme Court to strike down law

SALEM (AP) — An anti-gay rights law passed by Colorado voters is "endorsement of discrimination for the sake of discrimination," according to Oregon's brief filed with the U.S. Supreme Court.

Oregon was among seven states to file briefs urging the U.S. Supreme Court to strike down an anti-gay-rights constitutional amendment passed by Colorado voters.

Meanwhile, the Oregon Citizens Alliance — sponsor of an anti-gay rights ballot measure that Oregon voters have rejected — also filed a brief with the U.S. Supreme Court in support of the Colorado law and others like it.

The high court heard oral arguments Tuesday in an appeal from a Colorado

Supreme Court decision overturning the amendment on equal protection grounds.

Oregon voters in 1992 and 1994 defeated proposed constitutional amendments barring specific civil rights protection for homosexuals.

Gov. John Kitzhaber asked the attorney general's office to file the Oregon brief.

"Twice Oregonians have voted down measures that discriminate against citizens on the basis of sexual orientation," Kitzhaber said Tuesday. "It is in Oregon's best interest to see that these types of discriminatory measures be found unconstitutional once and for all in the nation's highest court."

Oregon's brief says the Colorado amendment "stands as nothing more refined than a blanket endorsement of discrimination for the sake of discrimination — one that

elevates public and private discrimination against one group of citizens to the status of a constitutional right."

Peter Cogswell, a spokesman for Oregon Attorney General Ted Kulongoski, said the state's position is that "the wholesale authorization of discrimination against any group is unconstitutional under the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution."

Colorado "has withdrawn equal access to governmental protection from discrimination based only on one group's common personal characteristics," Oregon's brief says.

But OCA Chairman Lon Mabon said the issue is not basic civil rights because everyone has those "on the basis of their humanity."

The issue, he said, is whether rights should be based on sexuality, and citizens "obviously have a right to establish who

is a legitimate minority and who is not."

Mabon takes issue with the Colorado Supreme Court's decision to categorize gay men and lesbians as an "identifiable group."

"Could that apply to smokers, alcoholics, prostitutes — any group that can be identified?" Mabon asked.

Mabon said the OCA soon plans to begin circulating petitions for a third proposed initiative measure aimed at barring governments from adopting civil rights laws based on homosexuality.

While the OCA's past two statewide measures failed, anti-gay-rights ordinances sponsored by the organization won voter approval in more than 20 cities and counties.

Other states opposing the Colorado amendment were Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Nevada and Washington.



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Money: Employees didn't get computer major

■ **Continued from Page 1**

Mitchell said. "We're finally getting to the point that operating a computer is less and less of a specialty," he said. "You don't major in driving a car; you treat it as a tool. The computer is merely a productivity tool that allows us to communicate better."

Another University graduate, Tim Clark, happened to be at the right place at the right time when he began his business, LoudMouth Inc.

Clark, who graduated in 1993 with a master's degree in music, became a sound editor at Dynamix Corp., which creates video games for IBM personal computers. Before working at Dynamix, Clark said he had no experience with IBM computers.

But it was at Dynamix that Clark met Chris Stevens, and the two eventually approached their employer with the idea of starting a company to create computer-generated soundtracks for Dynamix's video games.

With Dynamix's support, the pair has created music and sound effects for 45 different computer games. And Dynamix is not their only client. Clark said they do work for six to eight different companies in Seattle, Bend

and the San Francisco Bay area.

The pair's work has also won them national recognition. Their soundtrack for "Incredible Machine 2" was awarded Best Audio for a 1994 PC Title by Computer Games Review.

"The composition of music is very rewarding," Clark said. "You have tangible evidence of what you've done. It gives you a sense of pride as you watch things fall into place."

As computers become more user friendly, the job opportunities in the computer and software industries are also expected to boom. The federal Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts that the demand for computer systems analysts, scientists and engineers will grow faster than any other job category in the next 10 years.

By 2005, there will 737,000 more openings than the 663,000 jobs in 1992.

Larry Smith, director of the Career Center, has noticed that in the last two or three years, more college graduates with non-technical degrees are seeking jobs in high-tech fields.

"Students know that the computer industry is growing rapidly," Smith said. "There are less skills involved to operate com-

puters. Until recently, you needed a degree in computer science to program [a computer]."

"There isn't a huge window in the industry for majors with non-technical degrees," he said, "but the window is increasing for people who are self-taught and have some experience with computer systems and networking."

The potential for high salaries is also drawing more college graduates to the computer and software industries.

Oregon's 13,000 software companies generate \$1.5 billion a year and employ a total of 10,000 people, said Sandy Hogan, executive director of the Software Association of Oregon. Software employees also earn the highest wages in the state with an average of \$40,000 per year, Hogan said.

Hogan said she sees the opportunities for college graduates with non-technical degrees growing in years to come.

"The reason is that software companies are started by technical people with great ideas, but they don't have the knowledge to advance those ideas," Hogan said. "They need people with marketing and advertising skills to advance their ideas."

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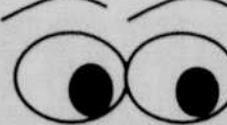
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