

just briefs

Massachusetts and San Diego spared ballot challenge

The Massachusetts state supreme court has ruled that the Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights Bill, signed into law by Gov. Michael Dukakis in 1989, will not be subject to referendum on the November 1990 ballot. Attorney general Jim Shannon ruled last December that a referendum would be unconstitutional; his ruling was challenged and upheld on July 5 by a 5-2 vote.

An effort in San Diego to repeal a new gay rights ordinance failed last June when opponents gathered little more than half of the 30,000 signatures needed to put the measure on the ballot. Leading the opposition was San Diego Citizens for Equal Rights, a conservative group associated with Rev. Lou Sheldon's Traditional Values Coalition.

Hong Kong removes penalties for gay men, but what about lesbians?

According to the July 12 *Oregonian*, Hong Kong's Legislative Council passed an ordinance, 31-13, to remove all "criminal penalties relating to homosexual acts committed in private by consenting men who have reached the age of 21." The debate was seen as a test of human rights in the British Crown Colony. The first bill of rights in the colony's history will be proposed soon, and those concerned with a broader interpretation of human rights anxiously await changes sure to come when Hong Kong reverts to Chinese rule in 1997.

National Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights Bill draws new cosponsors

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) announced on June 25 the signing of three new cosponsors to the Federal Gay and Lesbian Civil Rights Bill. Senators Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH) and Daniel Akaka (D-HI) and Representative Claudine Scheider (R-RI) recently cosponsored the bill which to date has the support of 79 Representatives and 12 Senators. NGLTF is conducting a massive national constituent pressure post card campaign. The preprinted message urges legislators to support S.47 and HR 655, the gay and lesbian civil

rights bill. To get a supply of post cards contact NGLTF at 1517 U St. NW, Washington D.C. 20009, or phone (202) 332-6483.

No gay rights in Rhode Island

Rhode Island's gay rights measure passed in the state Senate May 3 by a vote of 24 to 22. The bill was killed in the House on June 28 by a tie vote. Gov. Edward Di Prete did not take an official stand on the bill, even though in 1985 he became the first and only Republican Governor in the country to sign an executive order prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation in state government.

Open gay wins Ohio primary

Mike Gelpi, an openly gay candidate for U.S. Congress from Ohio's 12th district, won the Democratic primary election May 8, defeating two challengers and winning 52 percent of the vote. Gelpi's opponents were both gay and anti-choice.

Gelpi said his victory in the primary "sends a signal to the Democratic leadership in Washington—gays and lesbians are coming through the front door folks, and others are going to be coming through the front door immediately after me."

Challenger wages crusade against Studds

A wealthy Cape Cod businessman is stressing "family values" in what he calls a "crusade" to unseat Congressman Gerry Studds in November.

Jon Bryan, who also ran against Studds in 1988, has plastered the media with political advertisements "so inflammatory it would embarrass me to repeat them to you," Studds said.

One of George Bush's nephews is fundraising for Bryan and exhorted that, "If we are concerned about the state of the family in America, Gerry Studds is standing firmly in the way of our making any progress to strengthen it."

Lesbian and gays organize to make Roberts Oregon's next governor

A lesbian and gay committee has been formed to support Barbara Roberts' campaign for governor. Fundraising, as of July 15, has generated more than \$35,000. Several fundraisers are planned in the next few months. Check Out About Town for information.

On September 16, the gay and lesbian committee is holding an auction on Roberts' behalf. On October 6, Roberts will attend the Lucille Hart Dinner. To get involved call 273-8765.

Tacoma will get second chance

A petition drive to have city voters reconsider an anti-discrimination ordinance collected just 20 more than the minimum number of signatures needed to place it on the November ballot.

A similar ordinance from the city council was repealed last year. That law protected gays and lesbians from discrimination in seeking jobs, housing, loans and public accommodations. The new law would protect Tacoma residents from discrimination regardless of sexual orientation.

City of Seattle employees fight for domestic partner rights

Initiative 35 will appear on the November 6 ballot in Seattle. If passed it will repeal existing city law that allows municipal employees to use sick leave to care for their registered domestic partners, and to take funeral leave to attend a partner's funeral. It will also repeal the definition of domestic partnership.

First openly gay candidate runs for Congress

Sean O'Brien Strub, the first openly gay candidate in the history of the U.S. Congress is running for a seat in the November elections. Though Barney Frank and Gerry Studds have been re-elected after their sexual orientation became known, no openly gay candidate has ever been elected in the U.S. House or Senate. Strub is running against Republican Ben Gilman, who has held this seat for 18 years.

Kissing: A new fad?

According to the *Washington Blade*, an AIDS education poster which depicts two same-sex couples kissing is currently under fire from city and state lawmakers. The poster is part of the Art Against AIDS series which is currently traveling around the country to benefit the American Foundation for AIDS Research and local AIDS organizations. The poster shows three couples—a male couple and a female couple and an opposite sex couple kissing under the words "Kissing Doesn't Kill: Greed and Indifference Do."

Representative Monique Davis stated the opposition's position on the posters: "I think this entices children to a particular lifestyle," she said. "We don't need to give our children any additional items to be confused about. I think this makes [kissing members of the same sex] cool. It might make it a new fad."

New law in Madison Wisconsin formalizes gay relationships

Gay and lesbian couples may now formalize their relationships at the city hall in Madison, Wisconsin.

The Madison Common Council voted 16 to 4 June 5 to set up a system for domestic partner registration.

Local couples can obtain a certificate of domestic partnership from the city clerk, after proving they are in a committed relationship, live together, are not married and are not already registered with someone else. The process costs \$25.

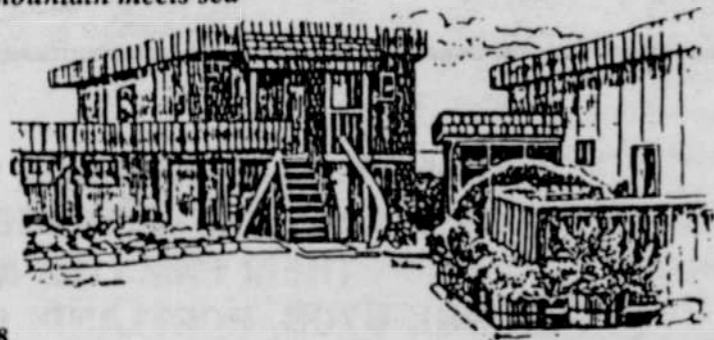
Supporters of the new law say domestic partner registration means Madison has recognized that gay relationships are just as valid as those of married people.

The same day, Madison passed a new law making it illegal for "public accommodations" to discriminate against domestic partners in the offering of family membership plans.

The law was directed at the local YWCA, which had refused to sell a family membership to two lesbians and their children.

Both ordinances were proposed by openly gay aldermen Jim McFarland and Ricardo Gonzales, Mayor Paul Soglin and seven other

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