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# national news

## HRCF butts heads with GOP

*Tim McFeeley makes "hyperbolic" statements regarding  
 the Kennedy race in Massachusetts*

▼  
 by Bob Roehr

**R**epublicans, as a party, do nothing for the gay community, and the Log Cabin people are kidding themselves and our community if they believe the Republican Party cares about us," said Tim McFeeley, outgoing executive director of the Human Rights Campaign Fund, in the Oct. 17 issue of the Boston gay and lesbian paper *In Newsweekly*.

"It has to be the height of political irresponsibility not to endorse Senator [Ted] Kennedy," he said. "Calling for the defeat of Senator Kennedy is asking for the lesbian and gay community to be lynched in this country."

The Republican National Committee took "strong issue" with those statements, calling them "short-sighted."

"Comments such as yours don't promote the dialogue and education that needs to take place on both sides of this issue [of homosexuality]," wrote co-Chair Jeanie Austin in a letter dated Oct. 25.

She labeled the remarks on Kennedy's election "horribly hyperbolic," and said they "only diminish the ability of the Human Rights Campaign Fund to live up to its stated mission as a bipartisan organization."

McFeeley admitted the language was hyper-

anti-gay rhetoric in their campaigns. Congressman James Inhofe (Oklahoma), who vowed to discriminate against gay people in hiring for his congressional staff, is running on a platform of 'god, gays, and guns.' Oliver North (Virginia) continually uses alarmist rhetoric about the 'radical homosexual lobby.' The list goes on. The party has shown no leadership in distancing itself from such inflammatory rhetoric or in promoting policies that would protect gay people from discrimination."

McFeeley said HRCF has contributed \$31,000 to Republicans so far in this election cycle. By one measure, that is a lot of money. But as HRCF's report of contributions through Sept. 9 shows, Republican candidates received less than 5 percent of total contributions. Twice that amount had been given directly to the principal national campaign committees of the Democratic Party; more, to individual Democratic candidates.

"It's a self-fulfilling prophesy," said Rich Tafel, executive director of the national Log Cabin Republicans. "You have to cultivate the parties, especially if you are a bipartisan organization. Do you meet with them? Do you talk to them? The reality is, you reap what you sow. If you don't talk to somebody, they aren't going to be good."




PHOTO BY DAVID BURNETT

*"It has to be the height of political irresponsibility not to endorse Senator [Ted] Kennedy. Calling for the defeat of Senator Kennedy is asking for the lesbian and gay community to be lynched in this country."*

**—Tim McFeeley**

bollic but said the race is "so important for gay people, that sometimes you have to scream to say, this is different." He cited Kennedy's continued leadership in the Senate "on the few significant victories we have had," such as the Americans with Disabilities Act, Ryan White [AIDS] authorization, and the rejection of Sen. Jesse Helms' discriminatory amendments on the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

"The Campaign Fund has long supported fair-minded Republicans who believe that the promise of America belongs to all people," McFeeley wrote to Austin on Oct. 28. "Unfortunately, a number of Republican officeholders and candidates do not support ending discrimination based on sexual orientation, and are even now using

"I'm not trying to take anything away from Kennedy," said Tafel. "But the reality is, a bipartisan organization's goal should be to have two good candidates, so that whoever wins, the community doesn't lose." He is bitter that some have tried to label Kennedy's pro-gay and -lesbian Republican opponent Mitt Romney as being a member of the radical right.

Tafel said, "Republicans will some day have a majority, and we will have a Republican president again. We can't keep hoping we are only going to be protected during those years of a Democratic reign and if a Republican comes in, we are victims again to this terrible onslaught."