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REPORT HOMOPHOBIC VIOLENCE

796-1703

FOR HIV POSITIVE ONLY

A SPECIAL DENTAL CARE PROJECT TO HELP IMPROVE THE LIVES OF PEOPLE WITH HIV



To participate in the Oral Care Project call:
Melody Scheer
Russell St. Clinic/
Project Dental Health
(503) 494-6300

All participants will be paid \$15.00 for each examination and a \$25.00 bonus for the final exam. Participants will help in efforts to improve the quality of life for people with HIV.

Study director: Dr. David Rosenstein, Oregon Health Sciences University

Project Dental Health at the Russell Street Clinic needs HIV participants for an Oral Care Project to study the overall health effects of regular dental care for people with HIV.

Eligibility:

- HIV positive
- 20 to 45 years of age
- Have a T4 count between 100 and 500
- Have at least 20 teeth

Participation:

- Dental exams 3 times each year
- Possible cleaning every 2 months
- Possible daily use of a special mouth rinse

national news

Supreme Court will review Amendment 2

The U.S. Supreme Court agreed last month to hear the case *Romer vs. Evans*, involving Colorado's controversial Amendment 2. The Colorado Supreme Court upheld a permanent injunction against Amendment 2 last October. That ruling was appealed by the State of Colorado. Colorado courts have ruled that the measure, passed by voters in 1992, violates the constitutional rights of gay, lesbian and bisexual citizens by denying these citizens the right to participate equally in the political process.

Amendment 2 would repeal any existing ordinances, such as those in Denver and Boulder, that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation. It would also amend the state constitution to prohibit all branches of state government (cities, school districts, courts, etc.) from passing such legislation in the future.

At issue is the question of whether or not Amendment 2 violates the equal protection guarantee provided in the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. That amendment forbids states from making laws that deny the privileges of citizenship and equal protection under the law to any person.

Virginia, Alabama and Idaho filed a friends-of-the-court brief, written by Robert H. Bork, that supports Colorado's appeal and the validity of the initiative. According to a story in *The Washington Blade*, Bork has written that the Colorado Supreme Court decision to uphold the injunction "is a significant threat to the right of direct self-government through citizen initiatives...." Bork's brief goes on to say that this decision "seriously threatens not only the right of popular democracy, but also many basic individual liberties guaranteed by provisions of federal law and state constitutions...."

The last time the Supreme Court heard a case involving homosexuality was in 1986. At that time the high court's ruling allowed states to outlaw consensual homosexual conduct. A ruling in the Colorado case is expected by July 1996.

Kristine Chatwood

discharge gay men and lesbians in the Air Force, for example, have increased. In 1991 the Air Force accounted for 15.9 percent of all such discharges. That figure nearly doubled, to 30.1 percent, in 1994.

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Proposed AIDS-funding cuts fall, while others remain

AIDS funding was one of only two areas where the full House Appropriations Committee voted to reverse cuts called for by its subcommittees. A majority of Republicans joined with Democrats to "restore" \$13 million in Ryan White CARE money and \$23 million for AIDS prevention and education activities to the current fiscal year budget.

However, the committee supported the recommendation to delete \$186 million, the entire appropriation, for the Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS program. The actions came on March 2.

"I was really surprised at the depth of bipartisan support—the number of Republicans and people we wouldn't have expected," said Gary Rose, lobbyist with the National Association of People with AIDS. He cited conservative Republicans like Jim Istook (Oklahoma) and Jay Dickey (Arkansas) who voted for cuts in the subcommittee but reversed themselves in the full committee.



Steve Gunderson

"We have crossed a historic threshold on AIDS with this vote," said Rich Tafel, executive director of Log Cabin Republicans. He cited those same conservative Republicans who voted for the funding "in a climate of the most severe budget cuts in years." It points out the need, he said, "to educate both Democrats and Republicans and not write anyone off on AIDS issues."

Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) led the efforts to restore funding. She acknowledged the importance of the victory while noting the loss on HOPWA funding. "The net result of that action will be a competition for funds for housing and care, thereby greatly reducing the services we can provide to people."

Gay Rep. Gerry Studds (D-Mass.) greeted the wins as "one of the few pleasant surprises we have had this year." He called himself "not normally a partisan soul," but then went on to characterize the Republican "Contract with America" as "zero funding for people with AIDS and housing."

His gay Republican colleague, Steve Gunderson (Wisconsin) interprets the broad cuts as "more an effort to keep faith with paying for the 'Contract' than it is long-term policy."

Everyone agrees that HOPWA became an easy target last December when President Clinton attempted to eliminate funding for it from his proposed budget for fiscal year 1996. Clinton reversed that decision only after a wave of protest from AIDS activists.

But Gunderson is optimistic that some funding for HOPWA can be salvaged before the process is over. He believes there is "an education focus that has to be dealt with." When members of Congress learn that the program serves people "abandoned by family...[and] in hospice care at the end stages of disease, then they have a totally different perspective," he said.

He also understands the political process. "The Senate isn't even going to take up rescission, but, if they do, it is going to be vastly different than ours [in the House]."

Bob Roehr

Bend woman to head NAACP board

By a 30-29 vote the executive board of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People elected Myrlie Evers-Williams to head its board of directors. Evers-Williams, the widow of slain civil rights leader Medgar Evers, becomes the first woman to head the NAACP in its 86-year history.

Evers-Williams was selected over William F. Gibson, who had held the chairmanship for a decade. Board members filed a federal lawsuit in December alleging fiscal mismanagement on Gibson's part.

Evers-Williams, who now lives in Bend, Ore., spent 30 years fighting to bring Medgar Evers' murderer to justice. Last year Byron De La Beckwith, of Mississippi, was convicted of Evers' murder. *The Oregonian* quoted Evers-Williams as saying "Medgar died for the NAACP, and I have always said that I will live for the NAACP."

Kristine Chatwood

"Don't ask, don't tell" doesn't work

According to a report issued last month by the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, the Clinton Administration's "don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue" policy is routinely ignored by many military commands. Violations of the policy have occurred in all four branches of the military.

The organization reports that according to Pentagon figures, the expected decline in the rate of discharge for gay men and lesbians in fiscal year 1994 did not materialize. Efforts to target and