

## Achtenberg leaps into S.F. mayoral race

All bets were off last month when Roberta Achtenberg, the highest-ranking lesbian or gay official in the Clinton administration, announced her candidacy for mayor of San Francisco. Achtenberg left her position as assistant secretary for fair housing and equal opportunity at the Department of Housing and Urban Development on April 30 to make the run for mayor.

Achtenberg, 44, was a member of the San Francisco Board of Supervisors when Clinton tapped her for the HUD post in 1993.

She survived a tough confirmation battle in the U.S. Senate, where she came under attack by Sen. Jesse Helms (R-NC).

Plans to defeat current San Francisco mayor Frank Jordan by forming a coalition of labor, sexual minorities and African Americans to back California Assembly Speaker Willie Brown in the mayor's race appeared to be up in the air following Achtenberg's announcement.



Roberta Achtenberg

Garnering support is only one of the hurdles Achtenberg faces. She must raise in excess of \$1 million over the next few months to mount a credible campaign.

## GOP senator leads fight to end job discrimination

Sen. James Jeffords (R-Vt.) has taken the lead in efforts to pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act in the Senate. Jeffords will work with Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.) in a bipartisan attempt to pass ENDA.

A bipartisan approach is also being taken in the House of Representatives. Spearheading efforts in that body are Reps. Gerry Studds (D-Mass.), Barney Frank (D-Mass.) and Connie Morella (R-Md.).

According to the Human Rights Campaign Fund, the U.S. public supports equal rights in the workplace for lesbians and gay men. HRCF cited a poll of those who voted in the November 1994 election that found that 70 percent of respondents supported equal job rights for lesbians and gay men. Polls also show that most people in the U.S. are not aware that federal law does not prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation.

## Lesbians denied insemination sue doctor

A lesbian couple in Minnesota filed a lawsuit in Hennepin County District Court alleging that Dr. Lisa Erhard refused to provide artificial insemination because they are lesbians.

According to a story in *Wisconsin Light*, Karen Heeney and Julia Beatty claim the doctor told them she was uncomfortable doing the procedure. She suggested they seek help elsewhere. Patricia Gambill, the couple's attorney, said, "The doctor was willing to inseminate...right up until she found out the patient was part of a lesbian couple."

Erhard's attorney, Rebecca Moos, said her client did not turn the women away because of their sexual orientation but because she was not experienced with the artificial insemination procedure. According to Moos, Erhard offered to provide prenatal care to the couple if they got pregnant.

## ICA just won't go away

Taking a lesson from the Oregon Citizens Alliance, the Idaho Citizens Alliance announced last month that it plans to submit two initiatives to the Idaho secretary of state. According to a story in the Boise newspaper *Diversity*, ICA chairman Kelly Walton told a crowd gathered April 15 to hear conservative presidential candidate Alan Keyes that a "reworded Proposition 1" would be one of the initiatives submitted. Proposition 1, an anti-sexual minority initiative, was defeated by Idaho voters last November.

The other initiative deals with tax credits for school choice.

## NGLTF board speaks to major issues

At its tri-annual meeting in Washington, D.C., at the end of April, the board of directors of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force unanimously adopted resolutions on three major national political issues: welfare, affirmative action and immigration policy. The preamble to each resolution reads, "Recognizing that the civil rights of gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people are inextricably linked to the civil rights of all people..."

Board co-chair Deborah Johnson-Rolon said: "Current events call on us to be clear on these issues as we move forward on the national, state and local level in alliance with other organizations and movements. We recognize that in order for this society to offer us the compassion and justice we seek as gay and lesbian people, that compassion must exist for all."

## GLOBAL expansion

The Gay and Lesbian Organization Bridging Across the Lands voted at its spring national board meeting to begin admitting gay and lesbian employee resource groups to its membership. AT&T LEAGUE is the first such group to join GLOBAL.

Board co-chair Paul Ludeman said, "The GLOBAL board felt that both types of groups share a common mission—to enhance the social, personal and professional development of gays in the workplace. [These groups] are a natural fit for GLOBAL."

Started in 1993, GLOBAL is a national nonprofit organization of gay and lesbian business and professional groups.

## NCLR champions gay and lesbian families

The National Center for Lesbian Rights, a nonprofit organization based in San Francisco, is continuing its 18-year fight for the rights of lesbian and gay families. NCLR is currently involved in helping groups in states like Nebraska fight attacks from the radical right that seek to erode or eliminate the ability of lesbians and gay men to form and maintain families. NCLR provides both technical and legal assistance in many areas of family law including adoption, foster care, child custody, co-parenting and reproductive rights.

NCLR staff and volunteers are also working to draw attention to issues of lesbian health care, the specific needs of lesbians of color, and the problems facing gay, lesbian and bisexual youth.

For information or to request assistance, contact NCLR, 870 Market St., Suite 570, San Francisco, CA 94102, (415) 392-6257.

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