

In four more years?

Kate Brown says the time is not yet ripe for her to seek statewide office

by Inga Sorensen

Oregon state Rep. Kate Brown (D-Portland), who a few weeks back was leaning toward a run for Oregon attorney general, has decided instead to seek an Oregon Senate seat.

"It was an extremely difficult decision for me," says Brown, a 35-year-old Portland attorney who has served in the Oregon House of Representatives since 1991.

"Running for attorney general would have essentially required me to quit my job so I could raise money on a full-time basis. I didn't want to do that," says Brown, who is openly bisexual. "I also wanted to slow my life down a little bit. I couldn't do that if I was running for statewide office."

done by her exploratory campaign revealed a lack of name recognition statewide.

"I think this just isn't the time for me to run for statewide office," says Brown, who has chosen to run for the Senate District 7 seat being vacated by Shirley Gold (D-Portland). "I think four years in the state Senate will allow me an opportunity to broaden my experience and hone my leadership skills."

Brown is a graduate of the University of Colorado at Boulder and the Northwestern School of Law at Lewis & Clark College. She has specialized in family law since 1985.

In 1991 she was appointed to represent House District 13, which covers portions of Multnomah

County. She served in the House again in 1993 and 1995. Before her appointment to the House seat, Brown was a lobbyist for the Women's Rights Coalition. She is staunchly pro-choice and pro-gay and -lesbian rights.

Brown, who lives in Southeast Portland, served as the co-chair of the House Judiciary Committee last session—even though Republicans controlled the House. It was a sure sign that leadership respected her, despite Brown's often differing views on social and economic matters.

She was somewhat successful last session in promoting the Oregon Women's Wellness Act, a package of nearly 20 bills designed to enhance the well-being of women, and introduced House Bill 3459, which would have prohibited

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—Kate Brown

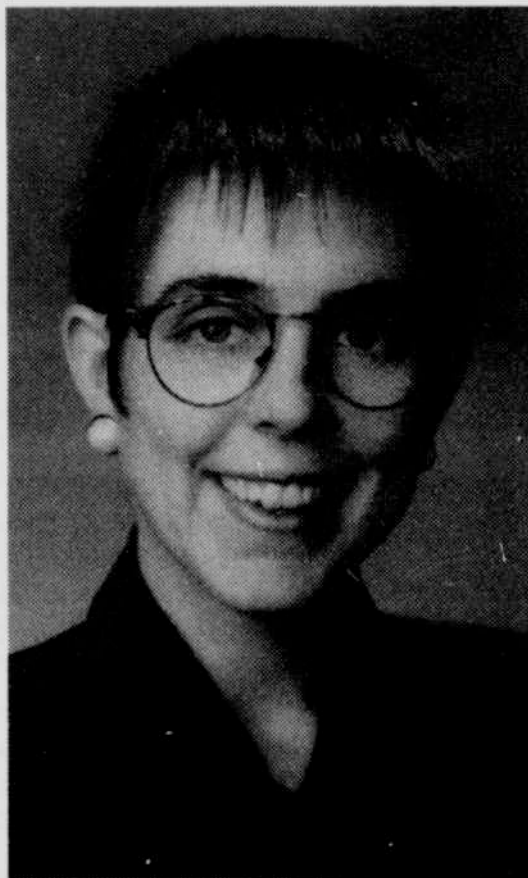
Oregon Attorney General Ted Kulongoski announced a few months ago that he would not seek re-election to another four-year term. His term expires in January 1997; his successor will be elected during the November 1996 election.

If she had won the attorney general post, Brown would have become the first openly bisexual person in the nation elected to statewide office.

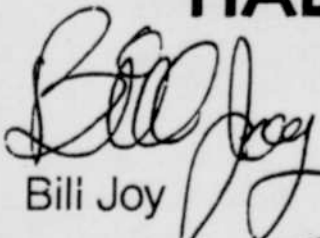
Brown, a liberal Democrat, is widely respected for her intellect and bridge-building abilities by legislative colleagues on both sides of the aisle. She admits, however, that preliminary polling

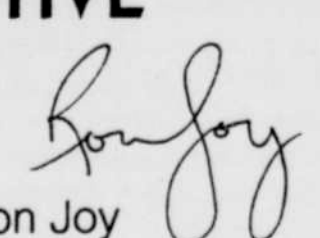
discrimination based on sexual orientation in employment, housing, public accommodations and real estate transactions.


Also in the state attorney general race is Rep. Kevin Mannix, a conservative Democrat from Salem, who you may recall, introduced a bill last session that would have barred unmarried women from receiving donor insemination. Mannix, who is anti-choice, also unsuccessfully promoted legislation that would have required the state to "favor" heterosexual marriages above all other relationships.



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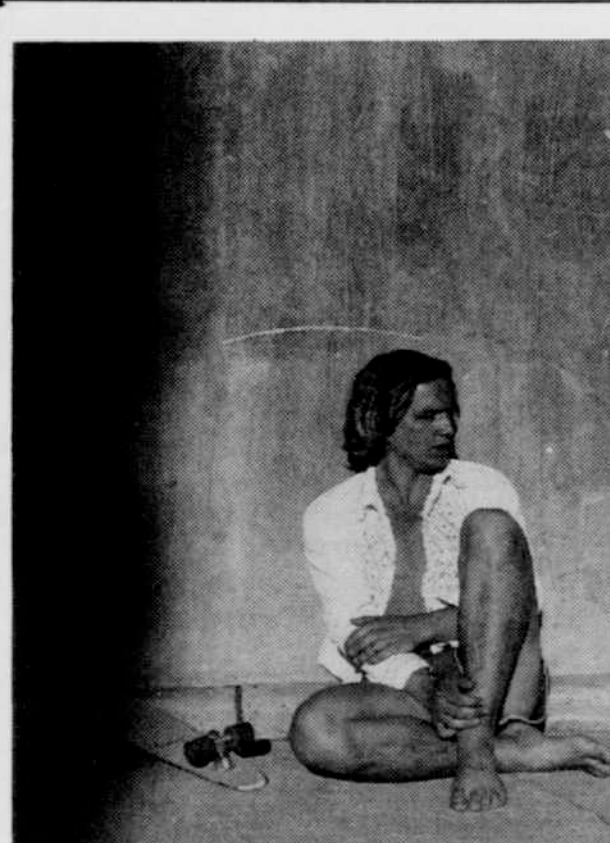
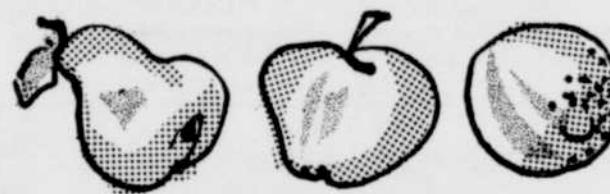
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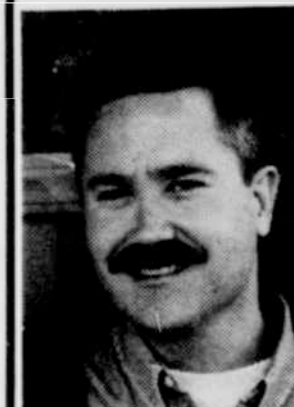
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