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Just Out



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members of the Brit band
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Now Hear This

An anti-gay bill looks to be headed for a hearing in the Oregon Legislature

BY INGA SORENSEN AND TIM JOYCE

It's a date. Well, almost. Out of four bills designed to undermine a December Oregon Court of Appeals ruling that brought equal rights within closer reach of gay men and lesbians, it appears one is being readied for a public hearing.

"It will probably be scheduled for mid April," surmises Jean Harris, who heads up Basic Rights Oregon, the Portland-based statewide group leading the lobbying efforts in Salem.



Gay rights supporters are signing petitions urging legislators to keep the *Tanner* ruling intact. From left: Shelly Stefan, Noël Ivey and Joah Keller

According to Harris, it appears House Joint Resolution 29 will see the light of day. It is the freshest of four bills aimed at the appellate ruling in *Tanner vs. Oregon Health Sciences University*, which bars sexual orientation workplace discrimination and stipulates that all state and local governments in Oregon must offer spousal benefits to the same-sex domestic partners of their employees.

"The *Tanner* case has blown open Pandora's box," Kevin Mannix told *Just Out* when the session began in January. The Democrat-turned-Republican from Salem says that's why he helped craft the anti-*Tanner* bills.

Those measures are: HJR4, which would constitutionally define marriage as the union between a man and a woman; HJR5, which would require voters to decide whether state or local governments may give spousal benefits to same-sex domestic partners; HJR6, which would require a public vote before a governmental body can prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation in hiring, firing, wages and promotion; and HJR29, characterized by BRO staffers as a blend of HJR4 and HJR5.

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Straight ALLIES

Sure, we know we're everywhere, but did you know they are, too? That's right, glance around and you'll spot friends and family, associates and acquaintances, all of whom are straight and support you. *Just Out* checks in with a few of our community's many straight allies.

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Clockwise from top left:
Carl Kiss,
Marc Abrams,
Ann Shepherd
and Joseph Tam