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Just Out

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Portland, Oregon FREE

It's a Wrap

An array of anti-gay measures floundered at the close of Oregon's legislative session

BY INGA SORENSEN

When Oregon's 1999 legislative session commenced in January, the *Tanner vs. Oregon Health Sciences University* decision topped a few tenacious lawmakers' hit lists.

"They wanted it undone," says Jean Harris, executive director of Basic Rights Oregon, a statewide organization that lobbied against a slew of anti-gay bills served up during what many critics have deemed the most contentious and unproductive session in years.

When the dust settled, *Tanner* remained standing, with all body parts intact.

But the positive news doesn't stop there.

"Given the conservative nature of this [Republican-controlled] Legislature, it's amazing not one anti-gay bill made it through," says Harris, just days after the session closed out in late July.

Bonnie Tinker, executive director of the Portland-based sexual minorities group Love Makes a Family, adds: "All the personal contact with

legislators made the difference."

She says the numerous battles this decade over lesbian and gay rights in Oregon have brought more gay people, their families, friends and allies into the political fold.

"We now have these folks who over the years have fostered relationships with their legislators, and that is so important," Tinker explains.

She credits a coalition of groups—including BRO; the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon; Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays; Rural Organizing Project; and various religious communities—with mobilizing constituents throughout the state.

"It took all of us to be effective," she says.

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PET PRIDE



In a community that prides itself on being inclusive, nonhuman companions are often included in the rainbow equation

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