

# GOODNIGHT, KNIGHT

**Lesbian lawmaker predicts the demise of a California anti-gay initiative sponsored by GOP state Sen. Pete Knight** by Rex Wockner

The state ballot initiative to ban same-sex marriage will fail on March 7, says openly lesbian state Assemblywoman Sheila James Kuehl, D-Santa Monica.

Kuehl was in San Diego Jan. 22 to raise money for her state Senate campaign. (Term limits prevent her from running for the Assembly again.)

"I think we're going to defeat the Knight initiative," Kuehl said at the fund-raiser. "There's been great organizing in northern and southern California. The most promising thing is that the more that people know about it, in polling or in long sort of question interviews, the less likely they are to support it. So that tells us that if we

lars in and there's only six weeks left till the election, and it's very important. And that's what it takes. It takes money to buy advertising, do mailers and send out tapes for house parties."

Several measures long sought by lesbian and gay activists passed the California Legislature in 1999—including a domestic partnership registration plan, a beefed-up statewide ban on sexual orientation discrimination, and a ban on anti-gay discrimination in schools—but Kuehl says there's still plenty to do.

"There will be some interest in increasing the number of benefits that you gain by registering as a domestic partner," she says. "There will be some attention still paid to AIDS research and treatment funding. I think we'll need to look at whether we need to do something to implement both AB 1001 [the housing and employment rights law] and AB 537 [the school discrimination ban]. They have to issue regulations in those agencies, and we haven't seen them yet. So we're going to have to push on that."

Kuehl was a television star in the late 1950s and early 1960s. She played Jackie Erwin on *Trouble with Father* and Zelda Gilroy on *The Many Loves of Dobie Gillis*. Her acting career came to an abrupt halt when network officials learned of her sexual orientation.

Kuehl went on to become an associate dean

at the University of California, Los Angeles. Later she graduated from Harvard Law School, taught law at UCLA and founded the California Women's Law Center.

■ For more information about the NO ON KNIGHT campaign, visit [www.noonknight.org](http://www.noonknight.org), e-mail [campaign@noonknight.org](mailto:campaign@noonknight.org) or phone (415) 227-1020.

REX WOCKNER has reported for the gay press since 1985. He has a bachelor's degree in journalism from Drake University and started his career as a radio reporter.



Openly lesbian California Assemblywoman Sheila James Kuehl spoke Jan. 22 in San Diego

get the word out, people will be less likely to support it."

The initiative, formally known as Proposition 22, gets its nickname from its sponsor, state Sen. Pete Knight, R-Palmdale.

"The No on Knight organization needs half a million dollars from San Diego," Kuehl explains. "If there's anyone who reads this [article], anyone who knows anyone who reads this, anyone who has not given money to No on Knight, they should give at least \$50 right away, and more and more and more if they can, because the other side is pouring millions of dol-

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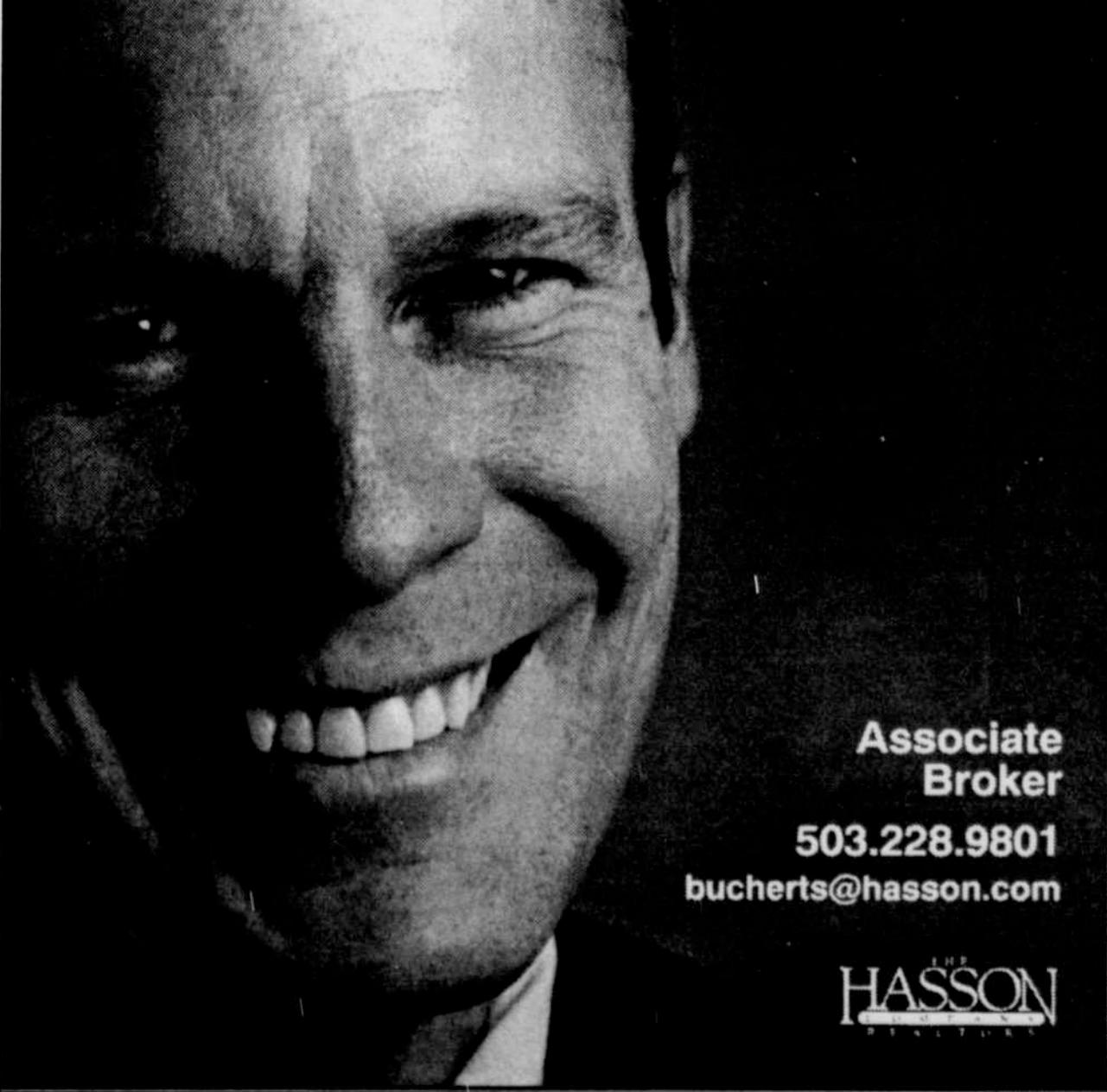
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