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# Just Out

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Portland, Oregon FREE

## Progress report

### Oregon's junior senator, Gordon Smith, shows signs of improvement

BY JIM RADOSTA

As he enters the fifth year of his U.S. Senate term, Gordon Smith is receiving credit from political pundits for evolving into an ally to the gay community.

The Oregon Republican served on the host committee for a pro-gay GOP coalition during the recent inauguration festivities and is expected to attend a hate crimes conference later this month in Eugene. Smith co-sponsored a bill last spring to reauthorize the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resource Emergency Act and received praise for his support of James Hormel, President Clinton's openly gay nominee as ambassador to Luxembourg. He also considers Portland businessman Terry Bean "a highly valued adviser on issues affecting the gay and lesbian community in Oregon."

Not bad for a politician who, just last fall, flunked the Human Rights Campaign's Voter Scorecard for the 106th Congress. The organization gave him a 57 out of 100 because he endorsed the Hatch Amendment (an "inadequate" hate crimes remedy) and voted against the Employment Nondiscrimination Act (which would have prohibited anti-gay bias in the workplace) and the Harkin Amendment (which expressed congressional support of Roe v. Wade).

What brought Smith around, most agree, was his role last year as the Republican sponsor of the Hate Crimes Prevention Act, now known as the Local Law Enforcement Act. Upon accepting the Portland HRC's Equality Award on Nov. 3, he reflected on his learning process.



Gordon Smith

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ILLUSTRATION BY RUPERT KINNARD

# SECOND Closet

## Domestic violence hides in the dark

by Jonathan Kipp

It isn't something most people want to think about, much less discuss. Many of us are certain it is an issue lurking in the dark corners of society—television reality shows like *Cops* fueling preconceptions and stereotypes.

Experts say the gay community is hesitant even to take a look at the problem of domestic violence. Some are calling the issue another "closet" for the gay community to break out of.

After all, 25 percent of all couples—including same-sex couples—are involved in some form of domestic violence. Statistically speaking, someone you know is being battered—or, more baffling, tormenting someone they claim to love.

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PHOTO BY MARTY DAVIS

Domestic violence expert Roper says abuse doesn't necessarily involve physical battering

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