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turning librarians into thought police armed with clumsy blocking programs," said Ann Beeson, litigation director of the ACLU's Technology and Liberty Program, which challenged the law along with the ACLU of Pennsylvania and other rights groups. "The court found that these programs are inherently flawed and will inevitably prevent library patrons all over the country from accessing valuable speech online."

At issue is the Children's Internet Protection Act, a federal law passed in December 2000 that ties crucial funding to the mandated use of blocking programs on terminals used by both adults and minors in public libraries. It defines such measures as "a specific technology that blocks or filters Internet access" such as the commercially available software N2H2, Cyber Patrol, Websense and Smartfilter.

Based on nine days of testimony from librarians, patrons (including Emma Rood, a lesbian teen from Portland) and online experts, the court supported its ruling with more than 100 pages of detailed facts, which established that the programs wrongly restricted access to "at least tens of thousands" of sites, including the Knights of Columbus, a Christian orphanage in Honduras and several political candidates. Ginnie Cooper, director of the Multnomah County Library, the lawsuit's lead plaintiff, welcomed the court's recognition that librarians are well versed in using their professional skills to help patrons find what they want online and avoid Internet sites they don't wish to see.

"The court's decision affirms the importance of local control in determining library Internet policies," she said. "No one wants children to be exposed to pornography on the Internet, on



PHOTO BY MARY DAVIS

Civil rights leaders join U.S. Sen. Gordon Smith (center) for the "Rally Against Hate" May 28

television or anyplace else. What's important is finding effective solutions to this problem."

As Cooper testified in March, such methods include establishing Internet policies that prohibit access to illegal content; using handouts, online guides, training sessions and recommended Web pages; providing terminals with optional rather than mandatory blocking software; and installing wraparound privacy screens to maintain a nonthreatening environment. Any appeal of the decision will go directly to the U.S. Supreme Court, which is required to hear challenges to the law.

SMITH RALLIES AGAINST HATE

U.S. Sen. Gordon Smith, R-Ore., led a "Rally Against Hate" May 28 to emphasize the critical importance of hate crimes legislation.

The Local Law Enforcement Act—which he introduced last year with U.S. Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass.—broadens federal hate crimes statutes to include sexual orientation, gender and disability. The legislation has passed the Senate twice and likely will pass again this year with strong bipartisan support.

Smith said it is becoming increasingly easy to convince his GOP colleagues to favor pro-gay legislation. "To some who may feel that, as a matter of faith or religion, they can't support this, I say, 'As a matter of your faith and religion you ought to support this, because there is no family value or religious value served by hatred.'"

Just Out asked Smith about the conservative Oregon Family Council, which recently distributed thousands of fliers indicating he opposes gay rights. He denied making the statement and said his office has contacted the organization to correct the error.

"We don't know why that is the case," Smith said. "We never filled out any questionnaire to that effect and have registered our concern with them that they would be representing a position that I supposedly have taken that I have not taken and, in fact, hold very much the opposite view."

VANCOUVER PROJECT DIRECTOR AILING

Lyn Zephyr, executive director of the Sexual Minority Services Project in Vancouver, Wash., has gone on an extended leave of absence because of ill health.

"This is not a permanent closure of the project, but all services will be interrupted at this time," she wrote in an e-mail May 27. "I and another volunteer will continue to monitor and maintain the Rainbow Links hot line recordings, which shall be finished shortly."

Zephyr is looking for a volunteer to handle Sexual Minority Leadership Roundtable busi-

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