

Speak Out

just asking What do you think about Ted Kulongoski's decision to return a \$15,000 campaign contribution linked to gay porn? Will it affect your vote in November?

I blame Ted Kulongoski, not Terry Bean, for poorly handling the gay campaign contribution issue, but if they are such good friends and they really want to win, why didn't Bean get Kulongoski's support to avoid public embarrassment? Two years ago, even President Bush wasn't stupid enough to repeat the mistake of returning gay money as Republican Bob Dole did during his 1996 presidential campaign.



Ted Kulongoski

The singling out, by the *Oregonian*, of campaign contributions derived from a completely legal gay business, while ignoring other controversial contributions, is homophobic. Bean should give Kulongoski the new DVD of *The Laramie Project*, which shows Oregon Republican U.S. Sen. Gordon Smith, in the extra features section, taking a fair and principled stand against homophobia and heterosexism.

I certainly won't vote for any homophobic, heterosexist or theocratic candidate such as Kevin Mannix, but Kulongoski's refusal to stand up against homophobia makes me question voting for him. Why can't the Democrats figure out what Bush and Smith already seem to know, that the independent swing voters, needed to

win elections, don't want unprincipled politicians who meekly condone gay-bashing?

THOMAS KRAEMER
Corvallis

...

It is unfortunate that this sort of thing is necessary. I wish society was more sex-positive in general and could accept the pursuit of sexual fulfillment as valuable and worthwhile. Porn money should not be a big deal, but I have no objection to Kulongoski's decision.

The mainstream media are pretty infantile and love to abandon everything relevant and rational to become hysterical over a sex scandal if given the chance. He was wise to nip this one in the bud so we can keep the debate focused on the issues, where it belongs.

MICHAEL BURDICK
Portland

next issue Now that Oregonians won't have to battle an anti-gay ballot measure this year, where should the queer movement focus its money, time and energy? Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)

Troen is walking the walk and talking the talk. Let's listen and learn.

MARK SCHELL
Portland

Express yourself

TO THE EDITOR:

I wore fingernail polish to work and around town in eastern Oregon, and everybody either stared or secretly gossiped about my appearance.

I wore the fingernail polish to see what everyone's comments would be, and yes, I was right. They either thought I was mental or was a cross-dresser.

It upsets me to think that my community will not accept me for who I am and what I choose to say, think or wear. If people would be

who they truly want to be, then our nation would be a better place.

I have seen family members who commit serious crimes because they either have given up because they cannot be themselves or they are too scared of what the community thinks of them. I, on the other hand, couldn't care less what people think of me because I choose to be myself.

It also concerns me that most teens are deathly scared to come out and be themselves because they're not sure how their parents will react. I am thankful that my parents and 99.9 percent of my family don't have a problem with me being openly gay. In fact, it's nice to be able to go visit my parents with my spouse and know that I am welcome and don't have to hide my sexuality from them.

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