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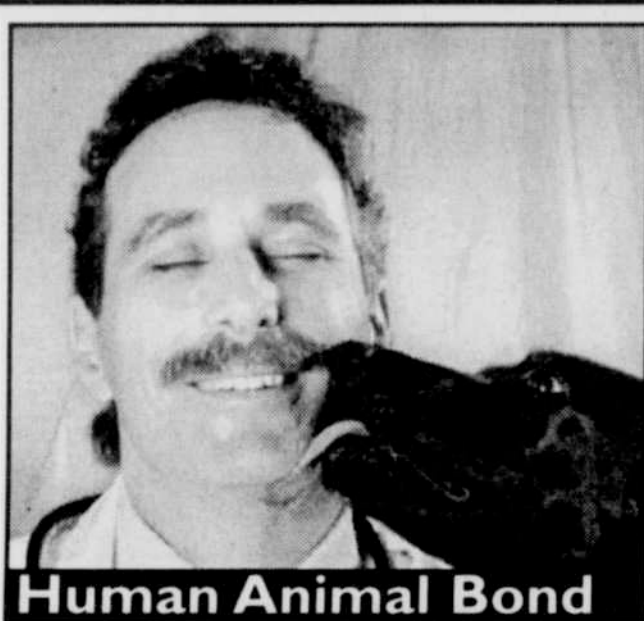
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NATIONAL news

NATIONAL

The Food and Drug Administration announced regulations May 20 to block men from making nondirect sperm donations if they have had sex with other men in the past five years.

Lambda Legal executive director Kevin Cathcart said the rules "look like they were written in 1982, not 2004. There is absolutely nothing about this proposal that's based on science or medicine—this is a policy based on bigotry.... It's completely illogical to say that a gay monogamous man who practiced safe sex four years ago cannot be a sperm donor, but a heterosexual man who had high-risk unprotected sex 14 months ago can donate his sperm."

Cathcart said policies are already in place to ensure that donated sperm is safe, regardless of the donor's sexual orientation. "HIV affects every part of our nation's population, and the FDA needs to realize that fact and stop treating gay men as the only people who contract HIV."

Lambda and other organizations submitted comments to the proposed five-year rule in 1999. They echoed those comments at the end of 2003 when they heard the FDA was moving toward publishing a final rule earlier in 2004; however, some of the suggestions they made were accepted in the final regulations, including changes to FDA proposed regulations that:

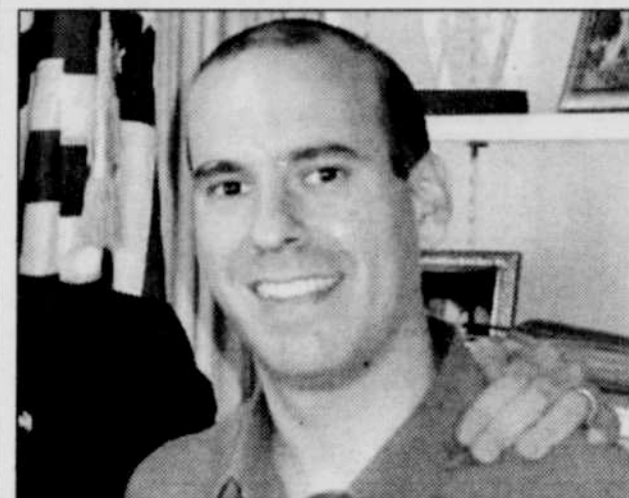
- Allow men who have sex with men to donate sperm directly to a recipient without requiring freezing of the sperm, which has several disadvantages.

- Allow men who have sex with men to directly donate to a recipient without a physician's required consent.

- Term donors "eligible" and "ineligible" rather than "suitable" and "unsuitable."

Years of San Francisco Liberalism," the document attacks her for opposing 1996's Defense of Marriage Act and the ban on gays in the military.

Also May 20, U.S. Rep. Tom Reynolds of New York, National Republican Congressional Committee chairman, lobbied a thinly veiled anti-gay taunt at Pelosi, saying she "should just go back to her pastel-colored condo in San Francisco and keep her views to herself." In response, her office noted that her family lives in a red-brick house.



"The Republican agenda is one of discrimination and hate," says Eric Stern of the Democratic National Committee

NORTH CAROLINA

The North Carolina Log Cabin Republicans were banned from participating in last month's state party convention. State party chairman Farrell Blount denied the local chapter's application for an informational booth, returning the group's check with a letter May 12 stating that its participation would be "counterproductive to the Republican agenda" because the GOP believes "homosexuality is not normal and should not be established as an acceptable 'alternative lifestyle.'"

"Unfortunately, the actions of the North Carolina party are not an isolated incident; instead, it is just another example of how the Republican Party is a party of the few and the Republican agenda is one of discrimination and hate," said Eric Stern, the Democratic National Committee's queer outreach director. "Like George W. Bush's endorsement of the Federal Marriage Amendment, the North Carolina party is trying to win political favor with their right-wing base by discriminating against hard-working, taxpaying Americans."

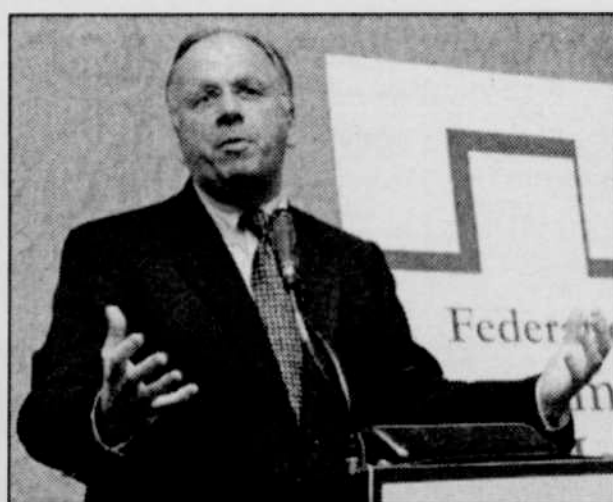
In 1996, Bob Dole's presidential campaign returned a donation from the national Log Cabin Republicans. The rejection drew loud protests from moderate Republicans and alienated many from his campaign. Eventually, Dole reversed his decision and accepted the donation.

National Stonewall Democrats extended an invitation to the Log Cabin Republicans to share table space May 22 at District Democratic Conventions in North Carolina. "The Democratic Party has a big tent, and the Stonewall Democrats have a big enough table to share space with the Log Cabin Republicans," said Kathy Heggemeier, Wake County coordinator for the Triangle Stonewall Democrats.

CALIFORNIA

The California Supreme Court held oral argument May 25 in a case seeking to invalidate the marriages of the 4,037 same-sex couples who obtained licenses earlier this year when San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom directed the county clerk to stop discriminating against gay men and lesbians.

Although same-sex couples were not allowed to participate in the lawsuit, several members of the court raised serious concerns about ruling on the validity of the marriages without permitting them to be heard. "To have the fate of the marriages of over 4,000 couples being determined without hearing from any of them would be a travesty," said Geoffrey Kors, Equality California executive director.



U.S. Rep. Tom Reynolds lobbied a thinly veiled anti-gay taunt at Democratic House Leader Nancy Pelosi

The Republican Party ratcheted up efforts to promote the discriminatory Federal Marriage Amendment last month when leaders distributed talking points that called same-sex unions a "national crisis" and, in the process, criticized half of U.S. families as inadequate.

Included among the talking points was a statement claiming that it is "a terrible message to the next generation [that] alternative family forms are just as good as traditional families," an assertion suggesting families led by single mothers, grandparents or same-sex couples are invalid and, thus, detrimental to children.

"George W. Bush and his right-wing allies are out of touch with reality when they demean half of America's families," said Ann Lewis, national chairwoman of the Democratic National Committee's Women's Vote Center. "Our families don't need divisive rhetoric; they need a president who will stand up for real family values like affordable health care, decent jobs and quality schools."

In addition, the Republican National Committee released a research paper May 20 blasting Democratic House Leader Nancy Pelosi of California for being "extreme and out of touch on homosexual issues." Titled "Totally San Fran: 17