

After failing to collect enough signatures to qualify for the ballot, the Oregon Christian Coalition has abandoned its attempt to recall Multnomah County Chair Diane Linn and Commissioners Maria Rojo de Steffey, Lisa Naito and Serena Cruz. The organization targeted the commissioners after they decided March 3 to end discrimination in the issuance of marriage licenses.

The coalition missed the June 7 deadline to submit the 37,000 signatures needed to place the recall on the ballot. According to The Associated Press, executive director John Belgarde said about 35,000 signatures were gathered.

But the commissioners shouldn't breathe easy just yet. The coalition is promising to attempt another signature effort later this year to place a recall on the fall ballot. In addition, Naito faces a runoff in November in order to retain her seat.

Pride Northwest will honor the commissioners with a special Champions of Pride Award at 6:25 p.m. June 19 in Waterfront Park.

#### BRO Issues Action Alert

The Defense of Marriage Coalition—which has until July 2 to collect more than 100,000 signatures to qualify a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage for the fall ballot—has been sending petitioners to Wal-Marts across the state, according to a June 10 action alert from Basic Rights Oregon.

The nonprofit organization is encouraging supporters to call their local store, corporate headquarters (800-WAL-MART) and the Wal-Mart Charitable Foundation (800-530-9925) and tell them to put a stop to this practice. BRO notes that Wal-Mart does

## RECALL EFFORT FAILS

Multnomah County commissioners can rest easy—for the time being

by Jim Radosta

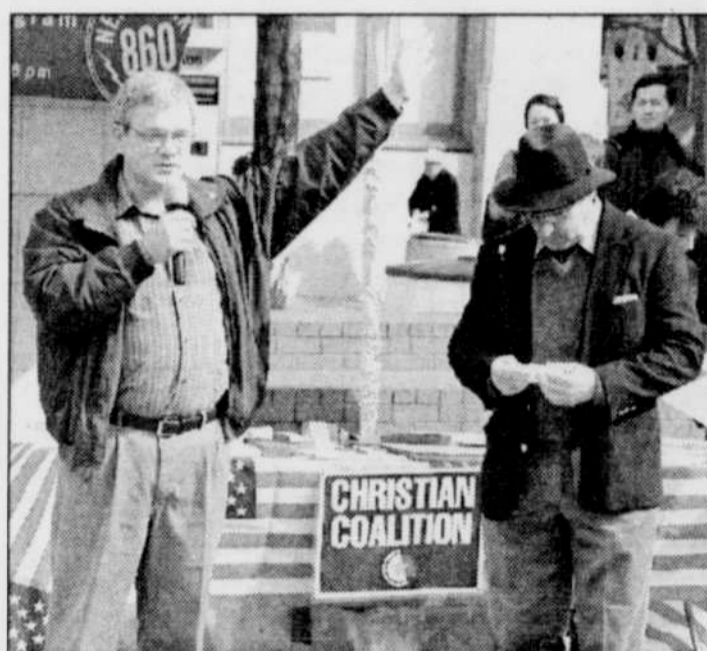
not have to allow petitioners to gather signatures outside its stores.

#### Study Finds Anti-Gay Measures Psychologically Harmful

While the state waits to see whether an anti-gay measure will qualify for the fall ballot, a new report shows that these campaigns may carry significant negative psychological and social consequences. Research released June 3 by the Institute for Gay and Lesbian Strategic Studies finds that referenda on same-sex marriage can affect the lives of both queer and heterosexual people in several ways.

According to Glenda Russell, author of the report and acting executive director of the institute, "These elections create high levels of psychological and social stress for many LGBT individuals as well as for the children of lesbian and gay families." Studies have demonstrated that these elections can lead to increased anxiety, depression, alienation and isolation in queers.

Earlier ballot measures on same-sex marriage and other gay-related issues frequently resulted in divided communities, with hostile rhetoric a mainstay of such campaigns. The political fight often reinvigorated old stereotypes and led to deep divisions within families and communities.



John Belgarde, Oregon Christian Coalition executive director, rallies against same-sex marriage March 13 in Pioneer Courthouse Square

"These research findings indicate that states may pay a heavy social price for putting the rights of any group up for a vote," said Lee Badgett, the institute's research director.

In addition, political science research indicates that voting on rights for minority groups tends to increase prejudices that divide members of the community. These elections also allow majority rule to make decisions that have a significant effect on the day-to-day lives of people who are in the minority.

The report, *The Dangers of a Same-Sex Marriage Referendum for Community and Individual Well-Being*, compiles and analyzes results of roughly 30 studies and accounts of referenda on gay issues in eight states. Data were drawn from a variety of sources including surveys, interviews, analyses of campaign materials, mental health indices and other research strategies.


#### Call for Submissions

A new project is under way to capture the stories of empowerment and personal transformation that resulted from the history-making 3,000-plus same-sex marriages in Multnomah County earlier this year.

*Buoyed by a Sea of Love, Powered by Winds of Justice* is being compiled by Roey Thorpe of Basic Rights Oregon, the Rev. Tara Wilkins of the Community of Welcoming Congregations and Holly Pruett, a longtime community organizer and writer. They hope to hear from members of the sexual minorities community whose relationships finally were legally validated, their families and the officiants who wed them.

Submissions should be 1,500 words or less. Writers should include their complete name, age, race/ethnicity (to help ensure a diverse collection), address, phone number, e-mail address and photograph.

Stories become the property of the editors. They will try to use every entry depending on the number of responses.

Send submissions by June 30 to [book@welcomingcongregations.org](mailto:book@welcomingcongregations.org). If electronic submission is a barrier, or you would prefer to share your story orally, e-mail [tara@welcomingcongregations.org](mailto:tara@welcomingcongregations.org). 

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