

Log Cabin Republicans' national board of directors voted 22-2 not to endorse the re-election of President Bush at a meeting Sept. 7. The following day, several prominent openly gay Republican elected officials declared their support for U.S. Sen. John Kerry, D-Mass.

The gay GOP group was founded in 1993, but a predecessor federation of local chapters declined to endorse the President George H.W. Bush in 1992. Its bylaws preclude it from endorsing any candidate other than the Republican nominee.

"Certain moments in history require that a belief in fairness and equality not be sacrificed in the name of partisan politics; this is one of those moments," said Patrick Guerriero, Log Cabin executive director. The decision not to endorse "empowers Log Cabin to maintain its integrity while furthering our goal of building a more inclusive Republican Party.... Some will accuse us of being disloyal; however, it was actually the White House who was disloyal to the 1 million gay and lesbian Americans who supported [Bush] four years ago."

Guerriero castigated Bush's support of the Federal Marriage Amendment.

"During the fight over the anti-family FMA, we sadly watched as the president and his administration leaned on Republican members of the House and Senate to support this divisive and unnecessary amendment," he said. "We watched as the president's support...emboldened the forces of fear and

LOG CABIN NIXES BUSH

Gay Republican group refuses to endorse incumbent by Bob Roehr

exclusion to push anti-gay ballot initiatives and legislation on the state and local level. We watched as the radical right works to defeat fair-minded Republicans across the nation. We watched as the Republican Party platform rejected our party unity plank and included language opposing not only civil marriage but also civil unions, domestic partnerships or indeed any basic benefits for same-sex couples."

Guerriero also criticized Kerry, who "has repeatedly made clear his opposition to civil marriage equality and has supported discriminatory constitutional amendments in Massachusetts and Missouri."

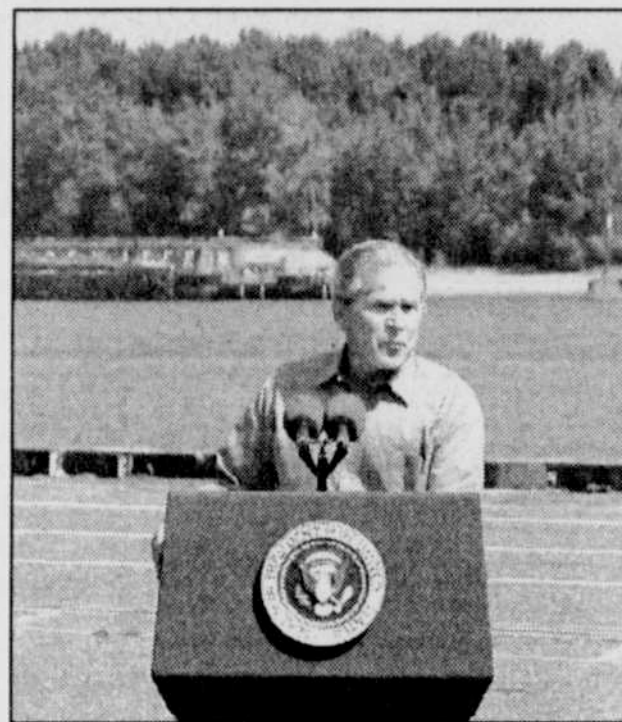
"I've come to believe that the 'big tent' is a big lie, and I've stopped fooling myself about it. There is no place for gays and lesbians within a Republican Party that is adversely dominated by Southern white men."

—David Catania

Log Cabin board chairman William Brownson said the organization will "shift our financial and political resources to defeating the radical right and supporting inclusive Republican candidates for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives." It also plans to open an office in California.

The decision follows an intense six-month process, dating from Bush's endorsement of the amendment, in which the board evaluated the administration and consulted with its members.

"The board made clear that it was not going to make its endorsement decision based just on



Log Cabin Republicans say President Bush was "disloyal" to the 1 million queers who voted for him in 2000

one issue," Guerriero said. "It wasn't just the FMA, it wasn't just what the president said in his acceptance speech, and it wasn't just the rejection of the unity plank. Quite frankly, Karl Rove and company made it very easy because they failed in each of those challenges to send a message that this campaign was going to reach out to all Americans. I don't think it was any one factor, it was the totality of the record."

Although the organization can only support

Republicans, Guerriero said individual gay Republicans "can state and vote their conscience."

Meanwhile, David Catania, a city councilor in Washington, D.C., and one of the highest-ranking openly gay elected Republicans in the country, endorsed Kerry's presidential bid in a Sept. 8 teleconference arranged by the Democratic National Committee. He was one of the "Austin 12," a group of gay Republicans who met with then candidate Bush in 2000 and endorsed his election.

Catania raised more than \$75,000 for Bush's re-election earlier in this campaign cycle but broke with the president because of the Federal Marriage Amendment. That cost Catania his slot as a delegate to the Republican National Convention and a seat on the platform committee.

"George Bush made the promise to be a uniter, not a divider, but he took the hottest cultural issue in this country and divided the nation right down the middle," he said. "He did that for crass political purposes. This is not about partisanship, this is about preserving the republic."

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Catania also struck out at a Bush administration that has "turned its back on cities," refuses to raise the minimum wage and is willing to allow the ban on assault rifles to expire. He said Kerry's record on gay issues was reason enough to support him. "Maybe people know better at this point than to tell me they are supporting George Bush, but I have yet to run into a gay Republican who is telling me they are voting for Bush." □

BOB ROEHR is a free-lance reporter based in Washington, D.C.



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Upcoming PABA Events:

Luncheon:
Wednesday, Oct. 13, 11:30-1pm
@ the Embassy Suites, Downtown
Speaker: Ralph Stevens, VP of Business Relations and Marketing at the Bank of Clark County:
"Giving Some Power or Oomph to your Networking Strategies"

After Hours:
Wednesday, Oct. 20, 6:00-8:00pm @
Wild Abandon
2411 SE Belmont

Biz Builders:
I- Every Tuesday morning, 7-8:30am at Cyberccino, 2130 NE Broadway
II- Every Thursday evening, 6:30-8pm at Cyberccino, 2130 NE Broadway

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