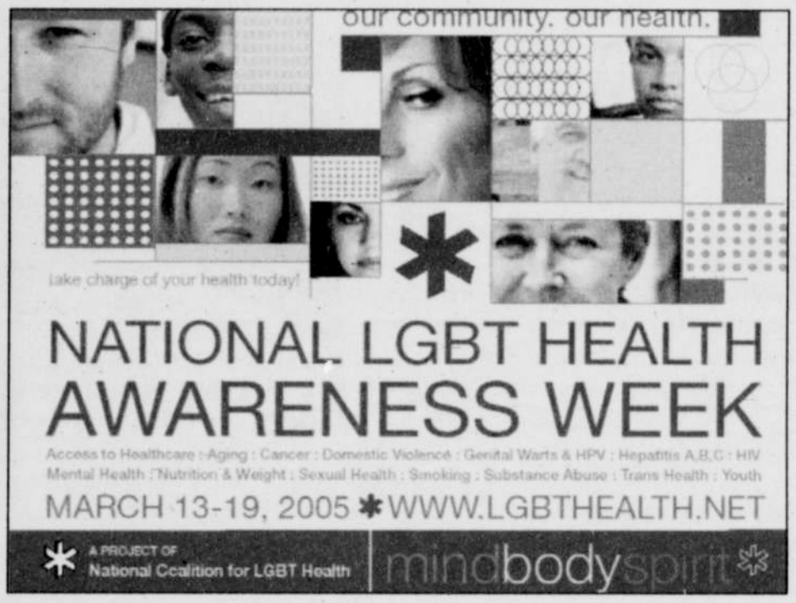
which took place March 13 to 19.

"The American Legacy Foundation is dedicated to providing the LGBT community with inspiring, appropriate resources to quit smoking," said Cheryl Healton, president and CEO of the American Legacy Foundation. "Research suggests that a higher percentage of the LGBT community may smoke, compared with the total adult population, and we are committed to raising awareness of the toll of tobacco on LGBT people and providing help to quit smoking."



Many queer smokers believe smoking increases their health risks, but fewer have made attempts to quit compared to other adults (75 percent vs. 80 percent). The foundation urges queers who want to quit smoking to call 800-399-5589. Legacy's Learn to Quit Line provides telephone counseling and information on smoking and health to people in Washington, D.C., and is the only one of its kind in the region.

In the nation's capital, the foundation continues to provide assistance to the sexual minorities community through grant programs. The Mautner Project, a national lesbian health organization based in D.C., delivers targeted anti-smoking messages to lesbians older than 40 through posters, ads and other campaign materials. The Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League trains queer youth in tobacco prevention techniques and provides them with the necessary guidance to conduct education programs for other youth and to research tobacco's impact on their community.

For more information, visit www.lgbthealth.net.

New Federal Marriage Amendment Introduced

An amendment was introduced March 17 in the House that would deny marriage and likely civil union and domestic partnership rights to same-sex couples. Introduced by U.S. Rep. Dan Lungren, R-Calif., the bill would have the same effects as last year's failed amendment.

"Plain and simple, discrimination doesn't belong in the Constitution," said David M. Smith, the Human Rights Campaign's vice president of policy. "Congress can't dress up discrimination. By any name, this amendment would still hurt American families. Not only would this amendment trample the rights of millions of same-sex couples and their children, but it would also deny any state the ability to ensure its families are protected under state law."

The proposed amendment reads:

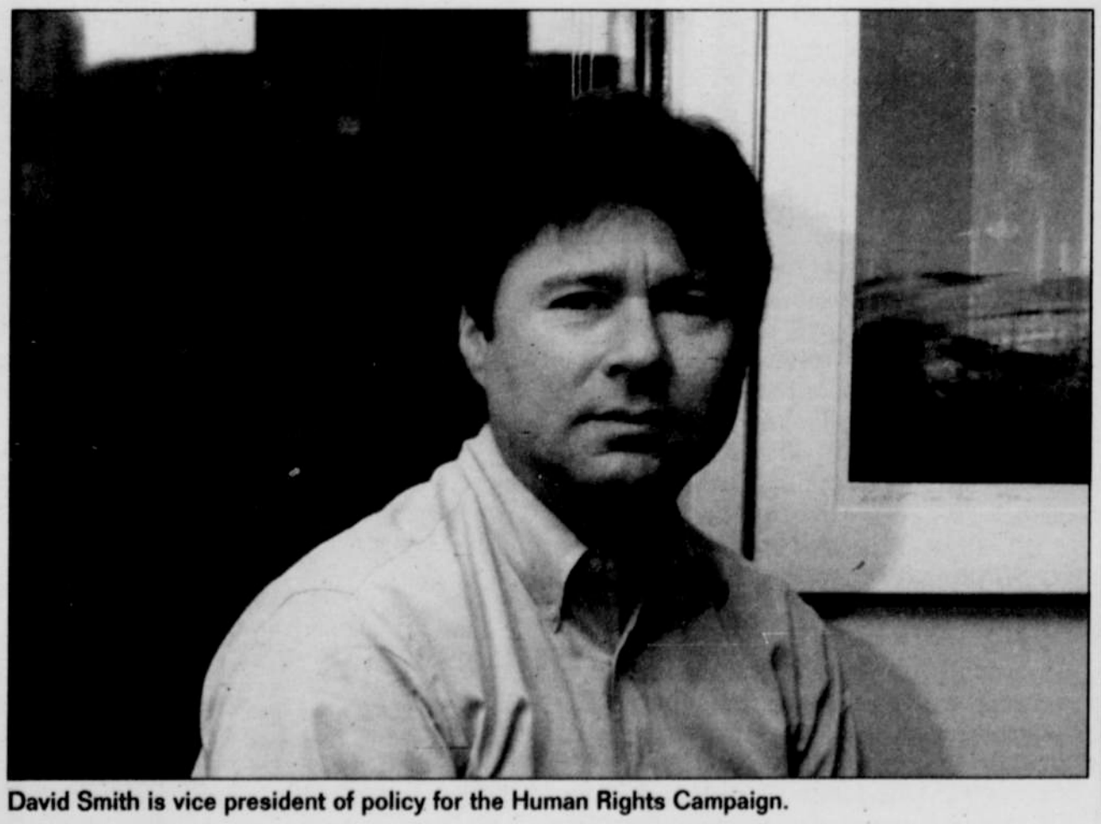
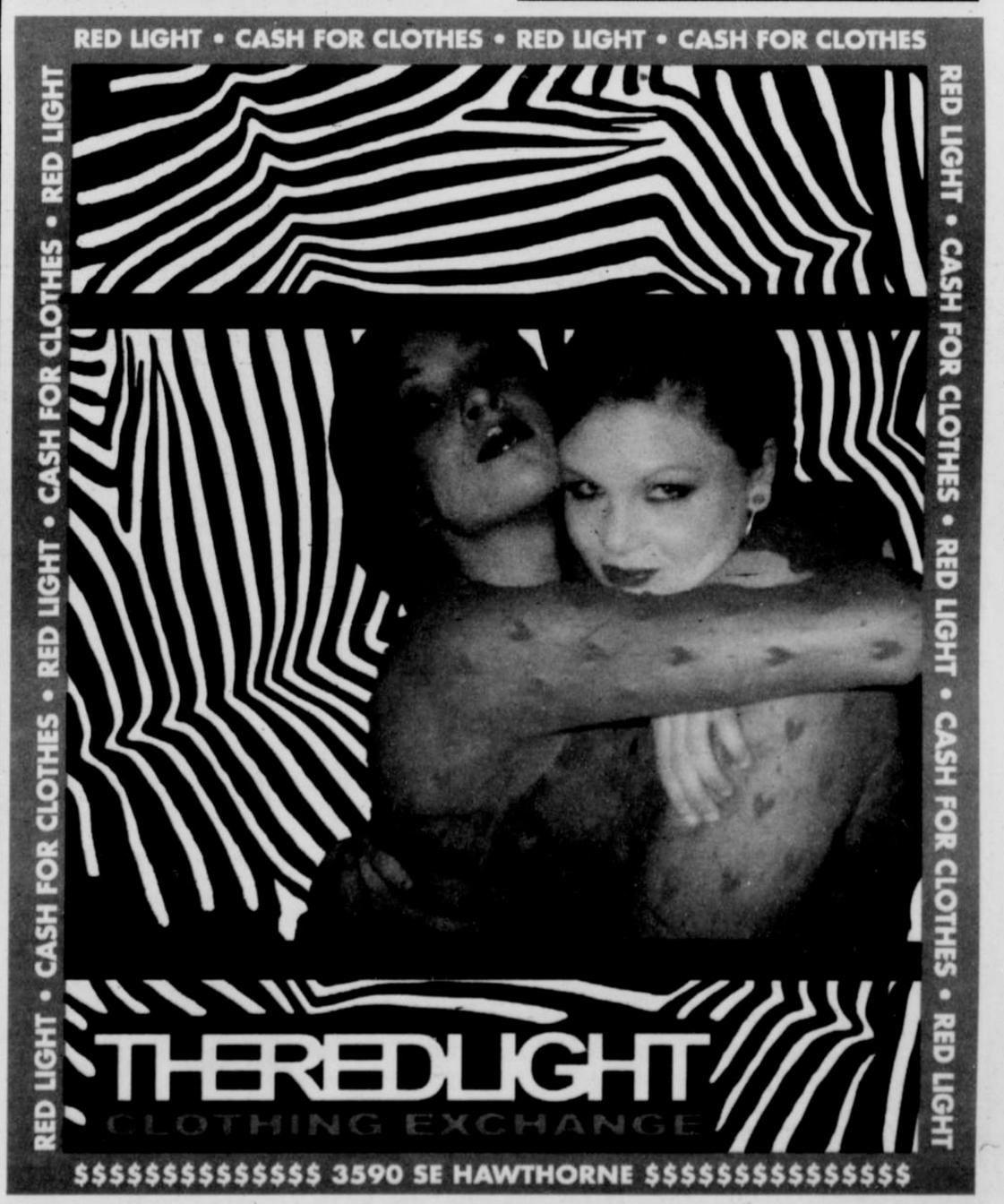
"Marriage in the United States shall consist only of a legal union of a man and a woman.

"No court of the United States or of any state shall have jurisdiction to determine whether this Constitution or the constitution of any state requires that the legal incidents of marriage be conferred upon any union other than a legal union between one man and one woman.

"No state shall be required to give effect to any public act, record or judicial proceeding of any other state concerning a union between persons of the same sex that is treated as a marriage, or as having the legal incidents of marriage, under the laws of such other state."

If passed, it would mark the first time the Constitution was amended to single out a group of U.S. citizens for unequal treatment. According to exit polling in November 2004, 60 percent of U.S. citizens support either civil unions or marriage equality for same-sex couples.

Complied by Sarah Dougher



David Smith is vice president of policy for the Human Rights Campaign.