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national

VIRGINIA

Marriage Ban Imminent in Virginia

A proposal to amend the Virginia Constitution to ban marriage for same-sex couples could have other, unintended consequences because it is written too broadly, opponents say. But the House of Representatives voted 73-22 to approve the amendment Jan. 17. The proposal must be voted on by the Senate and signed by Democratic Governor-elect Tim Kaine before it can go to voters in November.

Kaine supports the amendment and opposes civil unions, spokeswoman Delacey Skinner said.

Efforts to limit the scope of the vaguely worded amendment were defeated. Democratic Delegate Kristen J. Amundson's amendment, which received only 35 votes, would have eliminated all language except for: "Only a union between one man and one woman may be a marriage valid in or recognized by this commonwealth and its political subdivisions."

Democratic Delegate Vivian Watts' amendment was also rejected by a vote of 36-60. She proposed including a clarification that the amendment would not change "any other right, benefit, obligation or legal status pertaining to persons not married."



Governor-elect Tim Kaine intends to sign a bill calling for a referendum banning gay marriage in Virginia.

in this session in order to be placed on the November ballot.

NATIONAL

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force to Grant Scholarships

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force is accepting applications for its Messenger-Anderson Journalism Internship/Scholarship Program for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students. Self-identified queer undergraduate college students who plan to pursue a degree in journalism, communications or a related field at an accredited four-year college or university are encouraged to apply.

The award is \$5,000 for the first year, followed by \$2,500 each year for the next two years. Applicants must reapply each year. Winners are required to participate in an eight-week intern program at NGLTF's New York City office during the summer. The postmark deadline for applications is Feb. 24.

The scholarships allow students to hone their skills in several areas of communications practice. Responsibilities include writing and editing press releases, updating Web site materials, tracking and archiving news coverage of NGLTF, researching media opportunities and assisting with rapid response to breaking stories. Successful candidates should have strong communication skills, both written and oral; be prepared to work in a fast-paced, newsroom-like environment; and demonstrate a desire and commitment to work in a multicultural environment where commitment to diversity is an important institutional value.

Applications for 2006 can be downloaded at www.thetaskforce.org/aboutus/messenger.cfm.

Women and people of color encouraged to apply. The scholarship was donated by Larry Messenger and Jim Anderson in memory of Lawrence and Selina Messenger.

By encouraging queer students to pursue journalism and by assisting them with their studies, NGLTF hopes to improve the way the sexual minorities community and movement are covered.

COLORADO

Colorado Dems Push Partnership Bill, Job Protections

Democratic legislators in the Colorado statehouse say they'll work to pass the Colorado Domestic Partnership Act. The measure would grant certain rights to registered couples. A caucus also reintroduced a bill, vetoed last year by Gov. Bill Owens, that would ban workplace discrimination based on sexual orientation.

WISCONSIN

Governor Slams Marriage Amendment Push

Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle has denounced efforts to add an anti-gay marriage amendment to the state constitution, saying, "We should not enshrine discrimination in the constitution."

Doyle used his Martin Luther King Jr. Day speech to denounce the proposal, which defines marriage as being between a man and woman. It passed the Legislature last year and needs to be passed a second time



Wisconsin Gov. Jim Doyle addresses a Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration by stating, "We should not enshrine discrimination in the constitution."

OKLAHOMA Prominent Anti-Gay Minister Arrested on Sex Charge

It was reported Jan. 5 that the Rev. Lonnie Latham, a member of the executive committee of the Southern Baptist Convention and senior pastor of the South Tulsa First Baptist Church, was arrested for offering to engage in "an act of lewdness" with a male undercover police officer.

The incident occurred at the Habana Inn in Oklahoma City, which describes itself as "the Southwest's largest gay resort." Latham denied the charges to