

any type of recognition of same-sex relationships such as civil unions or domestic partnerships.

"If the larger questions about same-sex relationships are to be considered and answered, they must be presented forthrightly—not as an incidental side note to an entirely different matter," said Fulton County Superior Court Judge Constance C. Russell in her ruling.

Georgia rights advocates say the judge's ruling is just the first step in a long process. "We expect that the ruling will be appealed," said Chuck Bowen, executive director of Georgia Equality, a statewide queer political advocacy group. "Judge Russell's ruling addressed the process which was followed instead of the merits of equal marriage."

INDIANA

Red State's Residents Strong for Basic Rights

In poll results released May 17, Indiana residents were found to overwhelmingly support basic human rights for gay and lesbian citizens. Majorities favored equality in employment, housing and public accommodations, often by very significant margins.

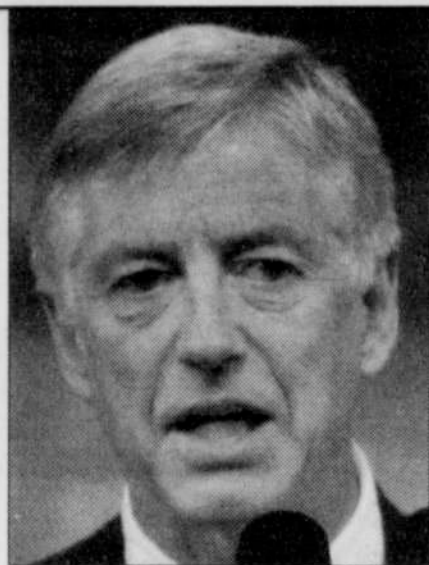
In the 2004 election, Indiana supported President Bush by a 60-39 margin.

"Hoosiers are increasingly supportive of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights; however, there is still no law on the books that protects LGBT Hoosiers from discrimination at the state level," observed John Clower, chairman of Indiana Equality, a queer advocacy group.

The survey asked voters about two specific rights for gay and lesbian couples: hospital visitation and inheritance. Nearly three-fourths (74 percent) of the respondents indicated that they support hospital visitation rights for same-sex couples. Slightly more than half (53 percent) support inheritance rights.

The survey found respondents overwhelmingly agree (79 percent) that gays and lesbians should have the same civil rights protections as others. Clear majorities support such protections in urban, suburban, small-town and rural areas and across all age, educational attainment and racial groups.

Respondents also overwhelmingly favor hate



Salt Lake City Mayor Rocky Anderson has extended benefits to domestic partners.

crimes legislation (77 percent). Moreover, of those who favor hate crimes legislation, the vast majority (85 percent) believes that crimes based on sexual orientation should be included.

"Local ordinances that bar discrimination based upon sexual orientation cover nearly 22 percent of

the population in Indiana. This growing trend highlights the need to change our state law to include these protections for all Hoosiers," said Walter Botich, legislative co-chairman for Indiana Equality.

VIRGINIA

Pat Robertson Chided in Photo Prank

Gay-bashing televangelist and right-wing crusader Pat Robertson got more than he bargained for when he posed for a photo with a group of clean-cut young fellows at a Virginia country club. The preacher's newfound friends turned out to be gay, and the photo turned up in a leading gay magazine.

The photo, which depicts a smiling Robertson surrounded by five young men in sportswear, is featured in the May issue of *The Advocate*, where it is accompanied by an open letter from one of the men rebuking Robertson for his hypocrisy.

The letter, by Andrew Brewer, reads in part: "Didn't Christ... say in Luke, chapters 12 and 14: 'No one of you can be my disciple unless he sell all that he has, give it to the poor, and come follow me?' This is just one of the scores of lessons that Jesus, who said nothing of homosexuality, preached in praise of poverty and against wealth. Respectfully, how do you square these verses with the multimillion-dollar enterprise that you have created and the personal fortune that you have amassed for yourself?"

"The hypocrisy of using his name to marginalize men like us—at times making our lives excruciatingly difficult—while directly and blatantly contradicting his very clear teachings is both bold and unfathomable.... Perhaps it's just that you don't know any better." 10

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Pat Robertson (second from right) makes some new friends in Virginia.

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