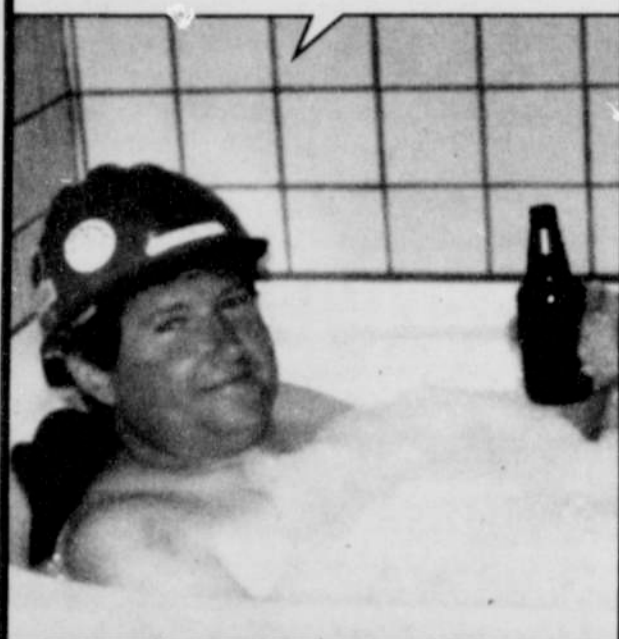


Thanks Christine!



"After a long day on the job site, nothing beats bubbles and beer in my remodeled bathroom. Thanks for taking our hands and guiding us through the maze of refinancing."

503-481-0574

halle@eaglehomemortgage.com



Christine Hall
Senior Loan Consultant
President's Club



LAURELHURST
DENTISTRY

CLARICE JOHNSTON D.M.D.
& ASSOCIATES

- Treatment explained and discussed
- Teeth whitening
- New patients welcome

503/233-3622

2520 East Burnside



northwest

Defeated Civil Unions Bill Resurrected

Does Senate Bill 1000 have a fighting chance in 2007?

by Jaymee R. Cuti

Nearly 30 years have passed since a group of Oregonians known as the Sexual Preference Task Force made recommendations to then Gov. Robert Straub.

Although Oregon could have been one of the first states to outlaw anti-gay discrimination, as the advisory body called for in the late 1970s, its queer residents remain without legal protection against unfair treatment in a variety of settings including housing, employment and public accommodations. Little legal ground has been won despite the lobbying efforts of longtime activists—even during sessions when Democrats were in power. Yet a few factors seem to make 2007 the prime session for passing a bill mandating equal treatment for queer Oregonians.

To the frustration of Senate Bill 1000 champions, Gov. Ted Kulongoski's Task Force on Equality made recommendations Dec. 21 that essentially echo the goals of the defeated bill. In its report, the task force recommended that state law should prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and should provide a framework for legal recognition of same-sex relationships in a form that is different from marriage. That could take the form of civil unions, which are congruent with Measure 36, the statewide same-sex marriage ban.

The task force's report was a culmination of testimony given by business owners, civil leaders and people who have experienced discrimination plus a review of anti-bias laws enacted in 10 Oregon cities, two counties and 17 other states.

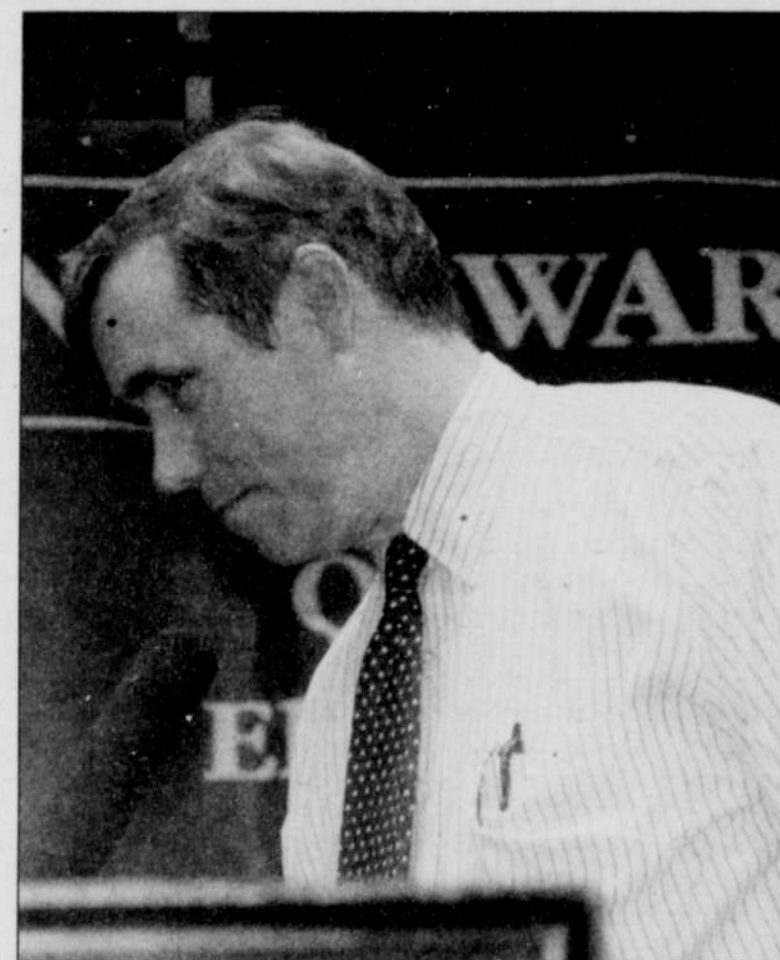
The day after the November 2006 election, a victorious Kulongoski promised that anti-discrimination legislation would have its day of fair debate in the Legislature.

"I believe we have before us a historic opportunity to make change in 2007, and you have my word that the legislative session will not end until we have had a fair and open debate on pro-equality legislation in the House and Senate," he said. That discussion is expected in April or May.

Though Basic Rights Oregon insiders refuse to reveal details about the type of bill they plan to bring to the Legislature, they say it will be "very similar" to SB 1000, with minor adjustments in the phrasing of education-based policy to inoculate the arguments of opponents.

The leadership of House Speaker-elect Jeff Merkley, D-Portland, also portends advances in civil rights for sexual minorities.

"When [House Speaker Karen Minnis] resorted to the kind of maneuvers that she did to block SB 1000, I don't think there was anyone more incensed and more unwilling to let it go than Jeff Merkley," said Rebekah Orr, a spokeswoman transitioning from the communications director post at BRO to that position for the House Democrats.



Oregon House Speaker-elect Jeff Merkley will ensure a House debate for gay rights legislation.

Merkley, a civil unions supporter, said he plans to put measures in place to restore the Oregon House policy of debating a bill that a majority wishes to discuss, referred to as the "rule of 31."

"If a majority of members call for it, we will have a debate. That was the rule that was destroyed in the last session for the first time in Oregon's history," said Merkley.

With a "bread and butter agenda" mostly centered on funding education, providing health care to children and enhancing state trooper presence, Merkley will also foster a tone of bipartisan collaboration by giving priority to bills with support from both sides.

Merkley says his sway toward social justice issues stems from the experience of growing up in a working-class family. His father developed a keen compass for fairness while working in Latin America during World War II. According to Merkley, his father was "profoundly offended" that Costa Rican nationals earned a 10th of what he and other Americans were paid to build the same highways. "That is a framework that resonates with me and what I've been about," Merkley said.

Before entering Oregon politics in 1998, the Portland native pursued a master's degree in public policy at Princeton University, was a presidential management intern in 1982, worked in the defense secretary's office and served Congress as a budget and policy analyst. Upon returning to Oregon in 1991, Merkley became executive director of Portland Habitat for Humanity, initiated a pilot project for YouthBuild in which gang-affiliated youth build homes in their neighborhoods and served as director of housing development at Human Solutions, a project that creates affordable complexes for low-income families. He was named House Democratic leader in 2003 and re-elected in 2005. 10

Crank up the Heat, and Let's Get Cooking!!



Serious education for the casual cook - hands-on classes in our professional facility with experienced chef instructors.

- Basics classes including Knife Skills, Kitchen Skills & Techniques, Understanding Flavor, Baking Basics, Pastry Basics and Wine Fundamentals
- Four-day series in Beginning, Intermediate, and Advanced Cuisine
- Ten-day Baking and Pastry Series
- Specialty and customized classes
- Team-Building events catered to your particular needs - from fun in the kitchen to functional organizational training
- Special Events for parties, groups, and clubs



Call today!

1.888.OCI.CHEF

1701 SW Jefferson Street - Check our class schedule at www.oregonculinaryinstitute.com

You
Belong
on
Our
Team!

Job Hotline: 503-988-5035

TTY: 503-988-5170

an equal opportunity employer

www.multcojobs.org