

Is This the Year?



Gov. Ted Kulongoski's pen is ready to sign the bills.

Equality legislation might be headed for passage

by Jack Turteltaub
Photos by Marty Davis

Are Oregonians ready to extend civil rights to gays? How about civil unions for consenting same-sex adults? In 2005, these questions didn't even seem plausible after a legislative debacle that left Senate Bill 1000 dead in the state House of Representatives. Those were dark days for Oregon gays.

Just two years ago, the prospects for these legal rights were as dead as road kill. Then House Speaker Karen Minnis, R-Wood Village, used her considerable power to change a more-than-century-old procedural rule to block a vote on the House floor to kill the Senate bill, a combination anti-discrimination and civil union measure that had passed with a bipartisan vote of 19-10 in the upper chamber. That crushing disappointment followed the devastating passage of 2004's Measure 36, which amended the state constitution to make same-sex marriage illegal.



A spirited crowd assembled March 7 in Salem to support the "basic fairness package."

Meet Pearl – Feline Friend and Survivor.

Our Siamese cat, Pearl, is a cancer survivor. She has been coming to Northwest Veterinary Specialists for over 2 years, and although now in remission, she continues to see her oncologist at NWVS every month. Pearl was 13 when we got the cancer diagnosis. Having never been sick a day in her life, we were stunned when we got the news. We had just lost our dog to the same disease a year prior, so we were bracing ourselves for the worst and fearful that her time with us would be short. Her weekly chemo treatments went well and we were thrilled each time we could extend the weeks between visits. We celebrated with balloons and flowers every month, and it was a huge milestone when we reached one year and then two. We owe her longevity to the quality care she has received from NWVS."

— Pearl's Owners: Emory & Rebecca Richardson, Vancouver, Washington



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