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Gays Oppose Holsinger

Gay rights groups; Senate Health Committee chairman U.S. Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass; and 35 members of the House are opposed to the nomination of James W. Holsinger as the next surgeon general.

Holsinger faced the Senate on the defensive July 12 when he denied claims that he is homophobic. His past writings and actions seriously call into question his ability to address the health needs of the queer community.

Holsinger, who claims people of all sexual orientations deserve dignity, wrote in a 1991 paper for the Methodist Church that gay sex was dangerous because "when the complementarity of the sexes is breached, injuries and diseases may occur."

Holsinger's hearing comes one day after former Surgeon General Richard Carmona told a congressional panel that top Bush administration officials repeatedly tried to suppress important health reports because of political considerations. He testified that the administration prohibited him from speaking or issuing reports on emergency contraception, sex education, stem cells or global health issues.

"Former Surgeon General Richard Carmona's profoundly disturbing testimony underscores why Dr. James W. Holsinger has been nominated to succeed him: The Bush administration not only expects but demands that right-wing ideology and partisan politics triumph over science, and they know Dr. Holsinger will compliantly deliver," said Matt Foreman, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

The committee is unlikely to vote before the end of the summer.

Gay-Focused Presidential Debate Scheduled

Gay network Logo and the Human Rights Campaign have crafted a presidential debate focused on gay issues. It will be broadcast at 6 p.m. Aug. 9 and through live streaming video at LogoOnline.com.

So far, U.S. Sens. Hillary Clinton, D-N.Y.; Barack Obama, D-Ill.; and John Edwards, D-N.C., have confirmed they will participate in this one-hour event. The debate will be conducted with a live audience in Los Angeles. On the panel questioning the Democrats will be HRC president Joe Solmonese and singer Melissa Etheridge.

Hate Crimes Bill Moves to Senate

U.S. Sens. Gordon Smith, R-Ore., and Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., filed a transgender-inclusive hate crimes bill July 11 as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act. They informed leaders they would seek a vote on the measure, called the Matthew Shepard Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2007.

The bill would give the federal government authority to prosecute hate crimes against gay and transgender people as well as against people with disabilities. Existing law allows federal authorities to prosecute hate crimes targeting people because of their race, religion or ethnicity.

The bill would also provide federal funds to help local law enforcement agencies investigate and prosecute hate crimes.

The House of Representatives passed an identical version of the bill May 3 by a vote of 237-180.

It is uncertain whether the bill will pass the Senate. Some say the Senate does not have a two-thirds majority needed to override a presidential veto.

Suicide Prevention Hotline Raises Record Funds

The Trevor Project, a nonprofit organization that operates the nation's only around-the-clock suicide prevention hotline for gay and questioning youth, raised more than \$150,000 at its annual Harmony, Heart and Humor fund-raiser June 25 in New York.

"This tremendous support will help guarantee that Trevor will continue to help save the lives of America's gay and questioning youth and will also be available as an important resource to them," said Charles Robbins, executive director of the project.

Recipients of the organization's annual honorary awards were recognized at the event. Nathan Lane—a Tony, Olivier and Screen Actors Guild award-winning actor—received the Trevor Hero Award; Bravo, a cable network that broadcasts *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* and *Project Runway*, was the inaugural recipient of the Trevor Commitment Award.

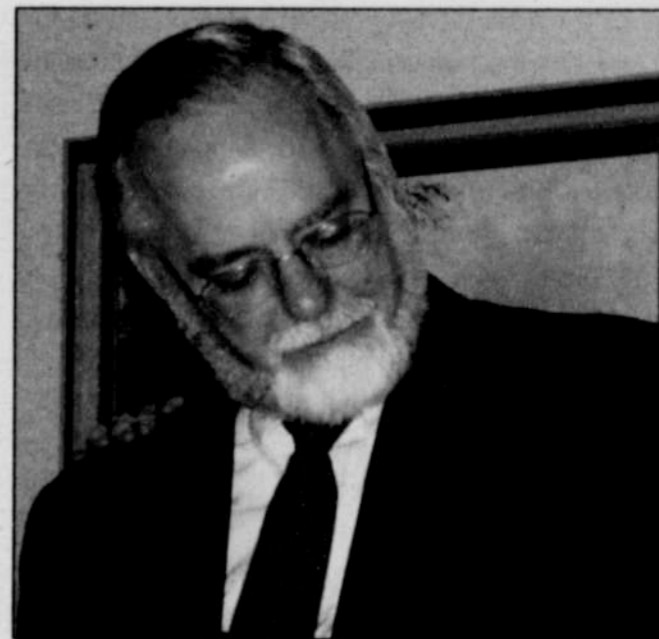
The event was also the platform for the kickoff of a major fund-raising initiative in support of the Trevor Helpline. The goal of the campaign is to raise \$1 million in multiyear gifts to finance two call centers that will take crisis calls made to the hotline. The call centers will each be named the Randy Stone Call Center in memory of one of the nonprofit's founders who died unexpectedly earlier this year. In support of this initiative and to honor Stone's memory and spirit, his close friend, actress Jodie Foster, who attended the event, kicked off the campaign with the largest donation in the organization's history.

The hotline, 866-4-U-TREVOR, which receives thousands of calls each year, assists gay and questioning youth who are in crisis and is a resource for those seeking information on how to help these people, including family members, educators and friends. Calls made to the hotline are free, confidential and handled by highly skilled counselors who are required to undergo extensive and rigorous training.

CALIFORNIA

Gay Film Preservation Archives Doubles

Beginning this month, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation will donate its exten-



U.S. surgeon general nominee James W. Holsinger denied embracing the homophobic attitudes he displayed in a 1991 paper.