

# national

## CALIFORNIA

### Marriage Bill Hits Governor's Desk

The California Legislature and Republican Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger will go head to head again, after the Sept. 7 passage of the second same-sex marriage bill by the state Senate.

The measure has already passed the Assembly. Schwarzenegger vetoed the bill in 2005, claiming it was a decision for voters, not the legislature.

"Two consecutive legislatures have now boldly and proudly affirmed the full, first-class and equal citizenship of all of Californians in loving and committed relationship who want their bond recognized and honored by the state in which they live and to which they contribute," said Assemblyman Mark Leno, D-San Francisco, the bill's author.

The bill would amend the Family Code to define marriage as a civil contract between two people instead of a civil contract between a man and a woman. It also reaffirms that no religious institution would be required to solemnize marriages contrary to its fundamental beliefs.

Schwarzenegger has until Oct. 14 to sign or veto the bill. Meanwhile, the California Supreme Court is expected to hear oral arguments late this year or early in 2008 challenging the state's refusal to recognize same-sex marriage.

### Chávez Wins Leadership Award

Christine Chávez, granddaughter of revolutionary labor advocate and United Farm Worker Union founder César Chávez, will receive the Los Angeles Leadership Award by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

Chávez began fighting for same-sex marriage rights when state Sen. Carole Migden, D-San Francisco, brought it to her attention that Latinos in California are largely not in favor of marriage equality for gays. She conducted public same-sex civil unions on Cinco de Mayo 2005 at the state Supreme Court in Sacramento. She also took a leave of absence from her public service job to lobby for same-sex marriage rights with Equality California.

Chávez serves as the district director for California Senate Majority Leader Gloria Romero, D-East Los Angeles. She says this civil rights fight is in line with her grandfather's ethics.

"One of the most important lessons my grandfather taught was about solidarity, not just to be there with farmworkers but to be there with other groups that were struggling," Chávez told *Just Out*. The awards ceremony is Sept. 30 in Beverly Hills.



Christine Chávez, granddaughter of César Chávez, will be honored Sept. 30 by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

MARTY DAVIS

a June 11 incident in which he allegedly tried to solicit an undercover officer. Critics have called the incident "entrapment" and a "witch hunt." Craig maintains that he is not gay.

## NEW YORK

### Marriages Recognized

A trial court judge in New York upheld the state controller's policy to recognize the marriages of same-sex couples married in Canada for purposes of the New York State Retirement System.

"This is one more court saying that respect for out-of-state marriages of same-sex couples is the law in New York," said Susan Sommer, senior counsel at Lambda Legal. "We thank Comptroller [Thomas] DiNapoli for standing up for the rights of lesbian and gay New Yorkers."

Lambda Legal intervened in the lawsuit, *Godfrey v. DiNapoli*, on behalf of Peri Rainbow and Tamela Sloan. The couple are state employees who were married in Canada and depend on retirement benefits. They have been together for more than seven years and are raising a daughter.

In September 2004, former Comptroller Alan Hevesi announced that, consistent with New York law, the retirement system would recognize the Canadian marriage of same-sex couples the same way it would recognize an opposite-sex marriage. DiNapoli has continued the policy.

The lawsuit began when a few residents of Westchester County in New York and the Alliance Defense Fund challenged the policy, claiming that recognition of out-of-state marriages of same-sex couples is illegal. The trial court determined that because such marriages are legal in Canada and because New York respects marriages that are valid where entered even if it unavailable here, the comptroller's policy should stand. 10

Compiled by JAYMEE R. CUTI

## IDAHO

### Craig Withdraws Plea

U.S. Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, withdrew his guilty plea in an airport sex sting Sept. 10. His hearing, scheduled for Sept. 26, is just four days before the date he originally announced he would step down.

A spokesman for Craig, however, said it is unlikely he will finish his third term unless the court acts quickly to overturn his conviction.



Embattled U.S. Sen. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, withdrew his guilty plea Sept. 10.

Judge Charles Porter will preside over the hearing; Judge Gary Larson accepted Craig's guilty plea. It is unknown whether the senator will attend the hearing in person, according to a spokesman for Craig attorney Billy Martin.

Craig admitted Aug. 27 that he plead guilty to misdemeanor disorderly conduct as part of an investigation by Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport police about lewd behavior in a men's restroom. That stems from

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