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NATIONAL

Bush Signs Landmark AIDS Bill

President Bush signed July 30 the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, an AIDS relief bill that repeals the U.S. ban on HIV-positive foreign visitors and immigrants.

The House of Representatives voted 303-115 to approve a Senate-passed version of the legislation July 16, which reauthorizes the U.S. foreign aid program. The Senate passed the bill July 9 by a vote of 80-16.

Bush, with a bipartisan majority in the House and Senate, agreed to include a provision in the bill that repeals a 1993 U.S. immigration law prohibiting HIV-positive visitors from entering the country. However, still in place is a 1987 Health and Human Services policy that added HIV to a list of communicable diseases that disqualifies HIV-positive visitors from entering the country as well as foreigners with HIV from being eligible for immigrant status.

Bush's bill allows the 1987 administrative policy to remain in place unless Health and Human Services or one of its component agencies, such as the U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, reverses the policy. Neither a Health and Human Services spokesperson nor a representative from the White House have clarified this loophole.

The bill authorized \$48 billion over five years to provide lifesaving HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention for people in the poorest countries of the world.

COLORADO

Vigil Held for Murdered Trans Teen

A vigil was held Aug. 9 on the University of North Colorado campus for Angie Zapata, an 18-year-old transgender Latina who was slain in her apartment July 16 in Greeley, Colo.

Police arrested Allen Ray Andrade for the murder July 30 after they traced him to her stolen car. According to police reports, the two met on a social networking site and were on a date when Andrade attacked Zapata with a fire extinguisher after discovering she was transgender.

Andrade was charged with first-degree murder and bias-motivated crime July 31.

"It seemed apparent from the information provided to the public that the factual scenario surrounding the vicious murder of Angie Zapata fell clearly within the language of Colorado's bias-motivated crime statute," said Mindy Barton, legal director at the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual & Transgender Community Center of Colorado.

The Colorado Legislature amended the bias crime law to include sexual orientation in 2005. The term "sexual orientation" specifically includes transgender status.

FLORIDA

Gay Straight Alliance Wins Groundbreaking Lawsuit

A Florida federal court ruled July 30 that school officials in Okeechobee must allow a Gay Straight Alliance club to meet on campus. In a precedent-setting order arising from a lawsuit brought by the

American Civil Liberties Union, Judge K. Michael Moore upheld his earlier ruling that GSAs do not interfere with abstinence-only education and held that schools must provide for the well-being of gay students.

"I can't tell you how happy I am that the judge agreed we have a right to create a safe space for



Police say transgender 18-year-old Angie Zapata was murdered in a hate crime while on a date.

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