

A proposal by Mayor Sam Adams was unanimously approved in June, when the **City Council passed a trans-inclusive health care bill** for City of Portland employees. Seattle followed suit in October, joining Portland, Multnomah County and the City of San Francisco as the only four municipalities in the country to offer the plan.

The theme of transition for Portland politics received a somewhat surprising development in late July when Adams announced that he would not be running for reelection in 2012. After months of speculation, Adams attributed the decision to a variety of reasons.

"It really boiled down to the work completed, the reforms underway, the state of the city and then what would be the requirements of a successful campaign," he told *Just Out* in August.

Following the announcement, **Portland's mayoral campaign began to intensify** in the fall, with three main candidates emerging in New Seasons president Eileen Brady, State Representative Jefferson Smith and former City Commissioner Charlie Hales. Portland Police Chief Mike Reese was rumored to have been exploring a mayoral run, but announced in mid-November he would be retaining his position with the police bureau.

On the national level, few moments shone as brightly as the official implementation of



the repeal of the military's ban on gays and lesbians serving openly. After receiving the go-ahead in late 2010, the **law known as "Don't ask, don't tell" was finally repealed** after 17 years and tens of thousands of military discharges as a result of the policy.

Repeal created ripples of reaction from across the country, and here in the Portland metro area, organizations like Veterans for Human Rights marked the occasion with regional celebrations, as well as ample reflection on the demise of a discriminatory chap-

The repeal of "Don't ask, don't tell" sent a wave of emotion and celebration throughout the community.

ter in American history. Local activists like Dr. Mary-Ann Humphrey-Keever—co-founder of VfHR and author of the influential tome *My Country, My Right to Serve*, which documented interviews with gay and lesbian soldiers discharged under DADT—explained that this crucial step forward amounted to "chipping away at the inconsis-

tencies in our humankind."

"The more we stand there and don't stand down, that's the important part about what we're doing," she told *Just Out* in September. "We've been [in the military] all along. Now we can just be real. It's a win-win for everyone."

Victories for gay marriage in New York state, as well as approval for civil unions in the state of Hawaii, also highlighted the progress of equality in the United States. The media attention alone given to the hard-fought victory in New York sparked renewed hope for the rest of the country to follow in those footsteps. Gay marriage is, without a doubt, the most highly debated political maelstrom facing LGBTQ advocates in the country. And with the Obama administration and the Department of Justice announcing they **would no longer defend the Defense of Marriage Act** in the courts earlier this year, activists remain hopeful that significant advances can be made on the federal level sometime in the next decade.

Despite Senate Democrats' best efforts so far—an early November bill to repeal DOMA will almost certainly fail in the Republican-controlled Congress—the state-by-state fight will likely be the focus heading into a new year.

Until then... ☐

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