

Marriage

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that said "Marriage. One Man. One Woman." Others wore stickers that read "Washington United for Marriage," a group that announced in November that it was forming a coalition to support same-sex marriage legislation.

Democratic Sen. Ed Murray, a gay lawmaker from Seattle who has led the push for gay civil rights and domestic partnerships, testified before the Government Operations, Tribal Relations & Elections Committee with his longtime partner, Michael Shiosaki.

"I have waited 17 years to ask this body to consider marriage equality for gay and lesbian families," said Murray, who is sponsoring the Senate bill. "I realize the issue of marriage for our families is emotional and divisive. It touches what each of us holds most dear, our families."

Opponents argued that the measure goes against traditional marriage and the Bible.

"You are saying as a committee and a Legislature that you know better than God," said Ken Hutcherson, pastor of Antioch Bible Church.

The National Organization for Marriage issued a statement Monday morning pledging a referendum campaign to fight any gay marriage law at the ballot. Last week, the group announced that it would spend \$250,000 to help fund primary challenges to any Republican who crosses party lines to vote for same-sex marriage in Washington state. So far, two Republicans in the Senate, and two in the House have said they would vote in support of gay marriage.

Gay marriage has won the backing of several prominent Pacific Northwest businesses, including Microsoft Corp. and NIKE, Inc., and last week a conservative Democrat who once opposed same-sex marriage said



Lacy Steele, Jacqueline Jones-Walsh, Oscar Eason, Tony Orange, Bob Barnes, Larry Gossett, Dorlie Rainey and Eddie Rye Jr. received plaques acknowledging their many years of activism in the Seattle community at the 30th Anniversary Celebration of Martin Luther King's Birthday at Garfield High School. All the recipients except Dorlie Rainey were instrumental in starting Seattle's annual MLK Celebration. Despite inclement weather this year's theme, Recapturing MLK's Revolutionary Spirit, brought out hundreds of people to the popular annual event which included workshops, a rally and a march down icy streets to the Federal Building.

he will now vote for it.

The state House is widely expected to have enough support to pass gay marriage, and Gov. Chris Gregoire publicly endorsed the proposal earlier this month.

The state Senate is now just one vote shy of having the 25 votes needed to approve the bill, with a half-dozen lawmakers remaining uncommitted.

In October, a University of Washington poll found that an increasing number of

people in the state support same-sex marriage. About 43 percent of respondents said they support gay marriage, up from 30 percent in the same poll five years earlier. Another 22 percent said they support giving identical rights to gay couples but just not calling it marriage.

When asked how they would vote if a referendum challenging a gay marriage law was on the ballot, 55 percent said they would vote yes to uphold the law, with 47

percent of them characterized as "strongly" yes, and 38 percent responded "no," that they would vote to reject a gay marriage law.

If a marriage bill were passed during this legislative session, gay and lesbian couples would be able to get married starting in June unless opponents file a referendum to challenge it at the ballot.

Teen

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three daughters got pregnant as teenagers and two sons got their girlfriends pregnant.

Teen pregnancy was practically a family tradition, said Rodriguez.

"It's hard to understand why they didn't learn from each other; I guess they all needed to make their own mistakes," she wrote in the book. "They have great kids, but it's never easy to have children before you're even fully grown yourself."

Her mother, Juana, said it was difficult to share her story so openly.

"There are a lot of women who go through stuff like that and they prefer to try to forget it, but sometimes it's better to get it out," she said, adding that the story was an important part of understanding Gaby, who was born later and has a different father.

"A lot of people were making comments, 'How could she do that?' without really knowing. They needed to know."

The experiment took on particular signifi-

cance in Toppenish, which is about 75 percent Hispanic. Latinas have the highest teen pregnancy and birth rate among any major racial or ethnic minority.

In the top 5 percent of her class, Rodriguez participated in a leadership class and lectured her friends about safe sex. But

also becoming a teen mom were way higher than average," she wrote. "If I gave people what they predicted, how would they react?"

The profile of teen moms has changed in recent years. Kids on shows like MTV's "Teen Mom" and "16 and Pregnant" have

'It's never easy to have children before you're even fully grown yourself.'

--Gaby Rodriguez

she still heard the refrain — often from members of her own family — that she'd end up just like her sisters.

"Being a Hispanic girl from a family full of teen pregnancies meant that my odds of

taken spots alongside movie stars on magazine covers. Now 18 and a student at Columbia Basin College studying psychology, Rodriguez said she doesn't condone teen pregnancy.

"It's something we have to be very aware of. I wish we could have more information on that in schools — and if parents don't want that, they should be more open about it," she said. "In my home, my mom was always open with me about it, and I'm absolutely glad that she was."

After her grand revealing, a student who was pregnant told Rodriguez she was glad she had taken on the project.

"She was so proud of me," Rodriguez said of the girl, now a senior. "Because it showed how much she had to struggle and I gave her the inspiration to move forward and inspire her child now."

If anything, Rodriguez believes that should be the biggest message from her experience: Things will definitely be OK.

"It's not the end of the road for them," she said. "It's going to be harder, but it's not the end of the road."

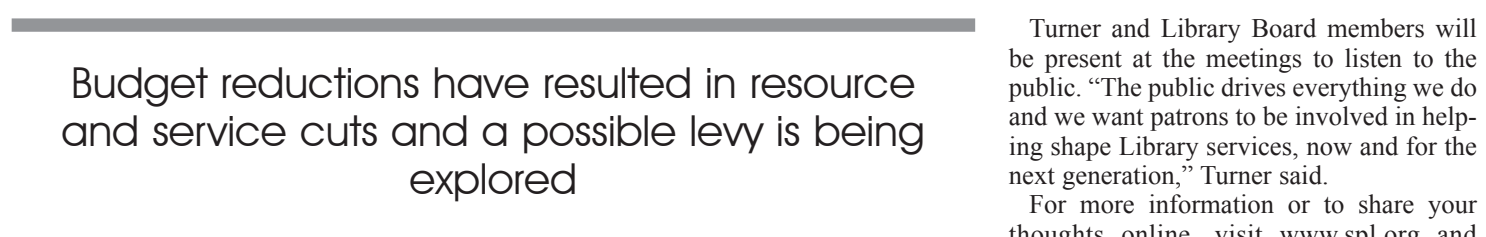
Library

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residents provided input to the Library through a survey, open houses, citywide meetings and focus groups in 2010.

Patrons also will learn more about the Library budget and alternatives for helping stabilize funding to support Library services now and into the future. Budget reductions have resulted in resource and service cuts and a possible levy is being explored.

"With the 1998 Libraries for All building renewal program, we made sure our Library facilities were up-to-date and able to sup-



port Library programs and users," Library Board President Marie McCaffrey said. "Now we are entering the next phase of bringing the Libraries for All vision to life —

extending our reach through improved operating hours, books and materials available in different formats and expanded digital access."

Turner and Library Board members will be present at the meetings to listen to the public. "The public drives everything we do and we want patrons to be involved in helping shape Library services, now and for the next generation," Turner said.

For more information or to share your thoughts online, visit www.spl.org and select "Libraries for All: A Plan for the Present, A Foundation for the Future," or call 206-386-4636.