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north & south CAROLINA

QNotes

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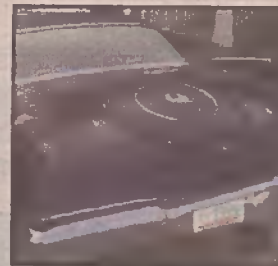
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Special
Q-Living Section:
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Federal Marriage Amendment dies in Senate, Marriage Protection Act passes in Congress

Lack of support and votes kills FMA, MPA expected to face similar consequences

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In the continuing struggle for marriage equality, gays and lesbians scored a big one when efforts to pass a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage failed July 14. Not surprisingly, the proposal failed to garner enough votes in the Senate to stay alive.

After final arguments by the leaders of each party, Republicans mustered 48 votes, 12 short of the 60 they needed to overcome a procedural hurdle and move the proposed amendment to the floor.

"In 217 years, we've only amended that sacred document 17 times," said Sen. Tom Daschle (D-SD) before the vote. "There have been 11,000 separate attempts."

Daschle said no urgent need exists to amend the Constitution now.

But Sen. Bill Frist disagreed. "It has become clear to legal scholars... that same-sex marriage will be exported to all 50 states," said the majority leader from Tennessee.

"Will activist judges not elected by the American people destroy the institution of

marriage or will the people protect marriage as the best way to raise children? My vote is with the people."

Republicans originally had expected they would win a majority, if not the 67 votes required for the 100-member body to pass a constitutional amendment.

In doing so, they were seeking to force the Democrats' presumed presidential ticket — Sens. John Kerry of Massachusetts and John Edwards of North Carolina — to go on the record in opposition to the amendment.

But in the last two days before the vote, a number of Republicans indicated they wouldn't vote for the measure, leaving GOP leaders red-faced over their fail-



While the Senate failed to amend the Constitution, Congress is attempting to set in motion similar efforts to derail marriage equality.

ure to muster support.

Sen. John McCain of Arizona broke forcefully with President George W. Bush and the Senate GOP leadership over the issue, taking

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Do you think the Marriage Protection Act will pass the Senate?

Yes . No

Mecklenburg County Commissioner's attempt to prevent gay adoption in N.C. fails

Even county conservatives opposed measure

by David Moore
Q-Notes staff

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — On July 13 the Mecklenburg County Commission voted against a proposal that was expected to be the basis for banning gays, lesbians and others from being foster or adoptive parents through the Department of Social Services programs.



All but one member of the Mecklenburg County Commission voted against a thinly-veiled attempt to block gays and lesbians from adopting and foster parenting.

Efforts by lesbian and gay parents, friends and allies as they stood before Mecklenburg County Commissioners and told stories about being foster parents and adoptive parents apparently had an impact on the Commission. At night's end, everyone but the Commissioner who made the proposal — Bill James — voted against it.

In Charlotte and Mecklenburg

see **COMMISSION** on 5

N.C. bishop approves blessing of same-sex unions

Schism widens between diocese and conservatives

by David Stout
Q-Notes staff

RALEIGH, N.C. — Bishop Michael Curry, 51, of the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina has reignited the battle over gays within the Episcopal Church (USA) by sending



Bishop Michael Curry has led the Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina since June 2000.

ing the parishes in his charge a letter that approves same-sex blessings and offers guidelines for clergy who perform them.

The timing is especially thorny because the diocese, like the remaining four dioceses in the Carolinas, is still dealing with the fallout from the controversial ordination of Rev. Gene Robinson, who is openly gay, as Bishop of the Diocese of New Hampshire.

The letter was issued July 1 in response to a June vote at St. see **BISHOP** on 4