

Republican council members voted against the measure while the four Democrats voted for it.

The proposal, pushed by council members Jenny Wilson (pictured) and Joe Hatch, was criticized for being in essence a form of same-sex marriage. Republican Mark Crockett said, "Society in this state has spoken out and said we want to give marriage between a man and a woman a special status."



Had the measure passed it would have granted spousal benefits to partners who have shared the same residence for at least a year and are jointly responsible for living expenses. It also would have made the county council the first government body in Utah to extend benefits to the partners of gay and lesbian civic employees.

Teen blogger's dad speaks out

BARTLETT, Tenn. — Joe Stark, the father of the 16-year-old gay blogger who received widespread coverage in the LGBT press for his wrenching tales of family conflict in the weeks leading up to him being sent to an ex-gay camp, has come forward to defend his actions.

Stark told the Christian Broadcasting Network that he did the right thing when he sent Zach to Love in Action International. "We felt very good about Zach coming here ... to let him see for himself the destructive lifestyle, what he has to face in the future and to give him some options that society doesn't give him today. ... Statistics say that by the age of 30

he could either have AIDS or be dead."

Stark also said he did nothing wrong in sending his son to the camp against his will. "Until he turns 18 and he's an adult in the state of Tennessee, I'm responsible for him. And I'm going to see to it that he has all options available to him."

International >

OutRage trio on Muslim 'hit list'

LONDON, England — Three officers of the LGBT civil rights group Outrage have received "repeated death threats from Islamic fundamentalists" according to reports. Peter Tatchell (pictured), the leader of OutRage, Brett Lock, its campaign coordinator, and Aaron Saeed, the group's spokesperson on Muslim affairs, have been warned they will be murdered, Tatchell revealed July 18.



The men have been told they are on a "hit list" and are going to be "beheaded" and "chopped up" in accordance with Islamic law. The news comes in the wake of the July 7 terrorist bombings in London that killed more than 50 people and that authorities say were the work of Islamic militants.

The threats apparently began after OutRage stepped up its campaign in defense of LGBT Muslims, including those fleeing attempted "honor killings." Tatchell said that Islamic fundamentalists have made attempts to track his movements by posing as journalists, police officers and

members of the Muslim Council of Britain. He said that police are investigating.

Amnesty calls for investigation

QUERETARO, Mexico — Amnesty International is calling for a full investigation into the unsolved murder of Octavio Acuna, 28, a gay activist who was found June 21 dead from multiple stab wounds in the condom shop he owned. The shop was a place for people to get information on sexual orientation and HIV/AIDS issues.

In 2004 Acuna and his partner filed a complaint with the local Human Rights Commission alleging that police officers had stopped them in a public park and announced that "their sort" should not be there. The commission reportedly took no action on the case. A few weeks before he was killed Acuna publicly condemned the commission's apathy.

Since Acuna's murder there has been little progress in finding his killer. Amnesty International is pressuring Mexican authorities to launch an investigation into the crime and determine why local police appear to be stonewalling.

Thai gov't to give free HIV drugs

BANGKOK, Thailand — In a July 15 statement from the Health Ministry it was announced that starting in October everyone in the country who is infected with HIV will receive anti-retroviral drugs regardless of ability to pay. Government officials believe the decision makes Thailand the first nation in the world to guarantee the drugs to all citizens.

The Health Ministry said the new drug program — which is actually an expansion

of a program that has already given free anti-retroviral drugs to 50,000 low income patients — is the result of a promise made at an international AIDS conference last year. The scheme is expected to cost the government \$68 million in the first year.

Thailand has been considered a success story in the region's fight against AIDS, with the annual rate of new HIV infections dropping to just over 21,000 from more than 140,000 in the early 1990s. It is estimated that nearly a million Thais have HIV/AIDS.

Poll: Most support marriage bill

OTTAWA, Canada — A new poll conducted for *The Globe and Mail* newspaper and the CTV television network shows that 55 percent of Canadians believe the next government should let same-sex legislation stand. Thirty-nine percent said they would like to see an attempt made to repeal it and 6 percent said they did not know.

The poll is seen as an indication of a resurgence in popular support for the governing Liberal Party and a further indication that Conservative leader Stephen Harper (pictured) has moved his party too far to the right. Harper has said that he would rescind the same-sex marriage law if he becomes prime minister.

"The Liberals have been successful in defining same-sex marriage as an issue of rights, not as a moral issue, and that prevails. Rights will win over other issues," said Tim Woolstencroft, managing partner of Strategic Counsel, the firm that conducted the poll.

**CHEAP
AND
EASY.**

What more could you want from a travel site? Orbitz has the most low fares and gay-friendly accommodations for popular destinations including Ft. Lauderdale, Key West, Palm Springs, Hawaii and Mexico.

Just Orbitz and go!



www.orbitz.com/gaytravel