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Letters to the editor and comments from Q-Notes Online. Web comments are not edited for grammar or punctuation.

HRC and local funding

First of all, I would like to thank Shane Windmeyer, Monica Simpson and Pamela Jones for their truly heartfelt and significant posts and commentaries in print and via Q-Notes' *assem-blog-e* (blog.q-notes.com), regarding the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), fundraising and local community support. Each of them touched on an important message. As members of the local LGBT and ally community, we have a responsibility to remain engaged, informed and connected on the local level. It is only through the efforts of our local, grassroots organizations that we succeed in this mission.

One point upon which I would like to further expound, and as was mentioned briefly by Monica in her post, is that HRC succeeds in what it was created to do. One of the main reasons why HRC was founded was for the purpose of ensuring fair-minded candidates are elected to Federal office. You only have to look to Colorado for proof that HRC's work pays off.

In the 2008 election, HRC provided Democratic challenger Betsy Markey with the tools necessary to ensure a solid victory (56 to 44 percent) over the incumbent U.S. Rep. Marilyn Musgrave. For those of you who were not aware, Marilyn Musgrave was the main sponsor of the Federal Marriage Amendment which would define marriage as the union of one man and

one woman. Rep. Markey herself, at an HRC luncheon, recently stated that she could not have done it without the support of HRC.

HRC's methods work. Without the funds provided by HRC's fundraising efforts, like the 2009 HRC Carolinas Gala, fair-minded candidates such as Betsy Markey and even North Carolina's own Kay Hagan — who was the first U.S. Senator to be Keynote Speaker at an HRC Carolinas Gala — may not have been successful in their campaigns. So, while I would not encourage anyone to stray away from their local community organizations in any way, I ask that you consider the work for which the Human Rights Campaign was created to accomplish.

— **Randy Floyd, Charlotte, NC**

Ed. Note — Floyd was a member of the 2009 HRC Carolinas Gala committee.

Smoking, R.J. Reynolds and HRC

I read the article, "Stamp of Approval" (March 21), and I'm left with two big questions, "What rock did Joseph Lee crawl out from under?!" and "How blind is he to trying to make a name for himself that he is indicting the HRC for RJ Reynolds and their inclusion in the list without even looking at the other companies that it contains?"

Just look at the list of companies and for many of them you should be able to quickly link them to one or more large scale, high body count (dead or diseased), events.

Seriously.

Boeing is listed as the 13th largest source of

air pollution and responsible for 11 percent of greenhouse gases being pumped into our air.

Dow Chemical and DuPont — Do I even need to mention how many people they have poisoned through contaminated dumping and poor product manufacturing? Dow Chemical gave us Napalm (high powered explosive) and Agent Orange (Vietnam, chemical warfare). DuPont is the company that designed/built/operated the Hanford Site as part of the Manhattan project, leaving behind 53 million gallons of *high level nuclear waste*? Oh, and that waste wasn't cleaned up; it's still sitting there, you know, in South Carolina, our backyard.

PG&E — two words, Erin Brockovich. Yes, the movie was about PG&E. Really I'm not making this up, regardless of it's impact on the LGBT community, do you really want them on a list celebrating great companies to work for given their carelessness and negligence toward human life? Yes I know it was a movie and that of course there was some license taken with the facts, but still, even at it's most basic components, it's a horrific reality.

Anheuser Busch and Coors — Given Lee's own representation of LGBT lifestyle choices (going to bars) do you really think they are there just to smoke and drink water? NO! How many deaths still occur each year due to alcohol? Drunk driving, chriossis of the liver, are these ringing any bells for you? Given we are so likely to spend our times in bars, exactly what do you think it is that keeps us going through the day after spending all night on a

drinking binge?

And the list goes on and on, these are just the companies that stand out to me, with notable and highly memorable instances of unbelievable greed, stupidity, and lack of care and concern for human life. Or more importantly the events that they have been responsible for. Using a surgeons scalpel to attack RJ Reynolds is very short sighted and can only be done in a vacuum, ignorant of the effects of many of the other companies on the list and the harm they have caused our global society. And to argue that they need to be removed due to their "harmful effects" would be to do so unfairly, if we can tolerate a little Napalm, Agent Orange, hexavalent chromium, alcohol, greenhouse gases and nuclear waste, why not a little cigarette smoke and cancer? ▀

— **Joseph B. Arrington, March 21, web**

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