

News Notes

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SEIU votes for trans inclusion

DENVER, Colo. — The member-delegates of the 2.1 million-member Service Employees International Union (SEIU) passed a resolution May 29 at their 2012 national conference here which states that SEIU local groups and members will bargain for transgender-inclusive health care coverage as part of their contract negotiations with businesses and employers.

Historically, transgender people have been categorically denied health care coverage for medically necessary treatment, irrespective of whether treatment is related to sex reassignment/affirmation. Until recently, nearly all U.S. employer-based health insurance plans contained "transgender exclusions" that limited insurance coverage for this population.

"This is a tremendous step forward in the fight for workplace equality for LGBT people," said Human Rights Campaign President Joe Solmonese. "Our friends at SEIU recognize that all workers should be treated equitably, and that includes being free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

—D.S.

Lawsuits seek marriage rights

CHICAGO, Ill. — Lambda Legal and the ACLU have filed separate, coordinated lawsuits on behalf of 25 couples respectively challenging the constitutionality of an Illinois law that denies gay and lesbian partners the freedom to marry and limits them instead to civil union status. The filings come one year after Illinois implemented civil unions for same-sex couples and just weeks after President Barack Obama from Illinois endorsed same-sex marriage.

The lead plaintiffs in the ACLU case are Tanya Lazaro and Elizabeth "Liz" Matos of Chicago's Northwest Side. Lazaro is a Chicago Police Department detective and Matos works as a system analyst for a trading firm in Chicago. They have a two-year-old girl, Jaiden, and just recently had a second girl, Sophia.

"It is remarkable that Tanya risks her life each day to go out into the City of Chicago and keep people safe, but the law does not recognize fully the family that we have built together," said Matos.

—D.S.

Tucker's 20

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Is the phrase "shut up and look pretty" apropos for anyone you know?

Yes, Rodney Hines. [Ed. Note: Hines is another Takeover co-founder and owner of The Furniture Connector.] Sometimes people just refer to us as "The Rodneys" and like to ask us which is the good or evil twin? After a couple of vodka tonics, I have to remind Hines to "shut up and look pretty" which makes me either the good one or the controlling one depending on how you look at it.

How much of the Olympics will you watch this summer?

I love the Olympics, so I expect to watch a lot of it. At a fundraiser this weekend, I bid on an official opening ceremony shirt.

If 8 is great and 9 is fine, what would 10 be?

10 would be big, bald and beefy. Nobody really likes a skinny boy. ::

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