

Washington Update:HEARINGS EXPECTED ON NATIONAL
LESBIAN AND GAY RIGHTS BILL

With a record 50 members of the U.S. House of Representatives and 6 members of the U.S. Senate co-sponsoring the Gay and Lesbian Rights Bill this year, the climate appears to be favorable for actual committee hearings on the bills during the 100th Congress, according to reports from the Human Rights Campaign Fund, a national lesbian and gay political action and education organization. Hearings are an important and necessary step towards passage of legislation.

The House Bill was introduced as H.R. 709 on January 21 of this year by Rep. Ted Weiss (D-NY). The Senate version, S. 464 was introduced by Sen. Alan Cranston (D-CA) on February 4. The Senate version is co-sponsored by Senators Kennedy (D-MA), Weiker (R-CT) and Moynihan (D-NY) among others. It would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to prohibit discrimination based on "sexual or affectional orientation" in housing, employment, education, accommodations, and public facilities.

"We've worked long and hard with Rep. Weiss and Sen. Cranston to get this many co-sponsors," said Vic Basile, executive director of the Campaign Fund. "We intend to work equally hard to see that hearings are scheduled in the House in the near future."

Hearings on the bill would allow both supporters and opponents an opportunity to go on record with their positions on the legislation. For lesbians and gays, this will mean a very high-profile forum in which to present evidence and arguments on behalf of their need for civil rights protection. It will also require that opponents put their biases and prejudice on record.

Almost all the co-sponsors of the bills were recipients of contributions from the Campaign Fund in last November's election. Contributions from the fund are contingent on a candidate's promise to support the civil rights bill.

Basile predicts that a record number of members of Congress will sign onto both bills as the year progresses. To make that happen, members of the gay and lesbian community and their supporters should write to their elected representatives, urging them to support the bills.

"Too often we hear people in Congress saying that they don't have any gays or lesbians in their districts," Basile said. "We know that isn't true. But the only way to prove it is for gay people to become visible."

No North Carolina Senator or Congressman has co-sponsored the bill. Senators and U.S. Representatives can be written (with "The Honorable" preceding their name) at the U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510, or at the U.S. House of Representatives, Washington D.C. 20515.

The texts of the bills were read into the Congressional Record, or are available to be read at the CGLA office.

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LESBIAN AND GAY AWARENESS WEEK

(continued from page 1)

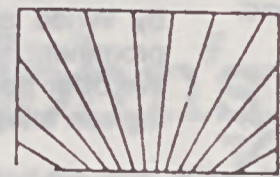
Maler, which has an intriguing gay theme. The play is tentatively scheduled for April 6, 7, 8 in Memorial Hall at UNC. Check the Union Box Office (962-1449) for ticket information after Spring Break. Thank you Carolina Union!

Back by popular demand will be a brown bag lunch with lesbian and gay activists to discuss campus, state, and national issues. Also, we will hold a forum on homosexuality and religion, and a workshop on homophobia for student leaders.

Last but not least, is our traditional Blue Jeans Day. On this day we ask all supporters of gay and lesbian rights to wear their blue jeans. This effectively demonstrates to the campus that gays and lesbians are forced to be consciously aware of their appearance to be accepted by the "straight" majority. Remember not to skip class on this very important day!

Also, if you have other ideas for the awareness celebration, please contact the CGLA office at 962-4401.

-Mike Nelson

**LGHP**

North Carolina Lesbian & Gay Health Project

Post Office Box 3203
Durham, North Carolina 27705-1203
919/683-218224 hour
answering
machine

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Staffed Mon-Thurs. 6:30-9:30pm

AIDS Project - Support of PWAs

Support group monthly
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Lesbian Health Committee

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