

CAROLINA CLIPS

ACT UP Crashes Helms' Fundraiser

More than 30 protesters calling themselves Helms Out of Georgia (HOG) gathered August 30 outside the Commerce Club in downtown Atlanta, where a reelection fundraiser for Senator Jesse Helms (R-NC) was being held. The activists chanted, "One-time Senator Coverdell sucks up to Jesse and goes to hell."

The fundraiser was quietly arranged by Helms and Georgia Republican Sen. Paul Coverdell. ACT-UP was tipped off by an anonymous call only 72 hours before the event. Helms has canceled past planned fundraisers in Atlanta after activists staged large protests.

The \$1,000 a plate luncheon seemed to provide evidence of a growing alliance between Helms and Coverdell. When the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Emergency Resource Act was under consideration for re-funding in the U.S. Senate, Coverdell originally agreed with Helms' proposal to eliminate it, though he eventually changed his position and voted for the measure. Coverdell did, however, support Helms' amendment prohibiting the use of federal funds to "promote or encourage, directly or indirectly, homosexuality."

Coverdell was elected in 1992 in an upset of long-term Democratic incumbent Wyche Fowler, whose loss was widely attributed to strength of the swing vote of the "Dump Wyche" coalition, a broad movement of gay voters angered by Fowler's lukewarm support of gay rights issues. Coverdell claims to support equal rights for all and points to his support of AIDS funding to substantiate his claim.

The HOG protesters also called for a boycott of Georgia peanuts, because the Georgia Peanut Growers Association co-sponsored the event with Coverdell. The activists pledged to continue monitoring the union of Helms and Coverdell.

SC Rep Links Gays and Suicide, Alcoholism

Greenville, SC—Firmly standing behind his theory that homosexuality is a choice, Rep. Bob Inglis, R-SC, met with more than 200 gay and lesbian constituents August 22 to discuss his views on gay rights, AIDS funding and other philosophical beliefs.

The town hall meeting, held in the County Council chambers was the climax of a rocky five-month liaison between Inglis and members of the Human Rights Campaign Fund in Greenville.

In March, three representatives of HRCF met with Inglis to ask his support for AIDS funding, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) and women's health care programs. It was at this first meeting when Inglis has been quoted as saying AIDS patients should accept responsibility for the lifestyle they lead and that he refuses to represent any homosexuals.

Inglis acknowledged the audience immediately by saying, "I know that I will say a lot of things you will disagree with a great deal. Homosexuality is a choice. It's not natural to be a homosexual. If it was, the population as we know it would eventually die off. It's just not natural of one's being to be gay," Inglis said.

Inglis said he considered it a "great offense to the civil rights movement" to

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The Front Page

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Serving gay men and lesbians in the Carolinas since 1979

Raleigh Council Kills Housing Project

By Jim Duley

By a 6-1 vote, the Raleigh City Council voted September 5 to deny the city's certification of a federally-funded housing project for people with HIV and AIDS, which had been planned for the city's Southeast side.

Council member Mary Watson Nooe, a candidate for Raleigh mayor, was the lone vote in favor of the certification.

The move effectively kills the \$1.9 million project, which was to be funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The AIDS Service Agency of Wake County (ASA) had applied for the funds through HUD's Section 811 program, which provides housing for people with disabilities.

ASA plan called for a 24-unit apartment complex for PLWAs and their families. HUD funding would have paid for the land, construction, and maintenance for a 20 year period. No city money was to be used for the project.

As part of the application for funding, HUD requires that the chief executive officer of the locality, in this case Raleigh mayor Tom Fetzter, certify that the project is in compliance with local comprehensive plans.

Although Fetzter is not required to do so, he brought the issue to the full City Council, which first considered the certification request at its July 18 meeting. At that time, the request was forwarded to the Council's Comprehensive Planning Committee, composed of council members Mary Watson Nooe, Eric Reeves and Paul Coble.

That committee took no action at its August 29 meeting, but held a special meeting to consider the application Sept. 5, where Reeves and Coble voted to recommend against certification, ostensibly on the grounds that the plan violated Raleigh's scattered site housing policy.

The scattered site policy — which requires public housing to be scattered across the city, rather than concentrated in a few neighborhoods — was last modified in 1983 and is out of date, according to Sally Wade, spokesperson for ASA. She feels that housing for the disabled should not be equated with other low-income projects in making decisions about location and community impact.

Council member Nooe agrees.

"I think, as the city staff originally reported, that this [project] meets the conditions of the scattered site plan," she said.

"As an 811 program, it only deals with people with disability, and the ADA [Americans with Disabilities Act], clearly not only protects the rights of disabled people, but also requires us to be affirmative about meeting the needs of the disabled," Nooe said. "When this policy was written, Section 811 did not exist."

Nooe believes that the council should exempt Section 811 programs from the scattered site plan as it does Section 202 programs for the elderly and other similar federal programs. She feels the real



Raleigh Councilmember Mary Nooe

reason for the council's decision is a general public sentiment against public housing, and a "not-in-my-backyard" mentality.

At the Council meeting, Nooe attempted to allow a representative from ASA to address this issue, but Mayor Fetzter denied her request, saying it was "not germane."

Eva Clayton, Sandra Bullock Send Down East Pride Support

Organizers of Down East Pride received letters of support and welcome from Member of Congress Eva Clayton, Mayor of Greenville Nancy Jenkins, and well-known movie actor Sandra Bullock. The first-ever lesbian and gay pride celebration in eastern North Carolina, sponsored by Down East Pride, will take place in Greenville on September 22nd and 23rd.

The Down East Pride Festival, which is themed "Coming Together With Pride," will consist of events featuring concert and dance performances, workshops, a theater production and an art exhibit. The main event of the weekend will be an outdoor festival at the Town Common on Saturday the 23rd.

Clayton, representative of the 1st District of North Carolina, said in her letter, "This occasion, at this time in our Nation's history, reminds us of the rewards of coming together and organizing for a common cause. This first Festival marks yet another step in your commitment to build a strong and solid foundation.Please know that as a member of the North Carolina Congressional Delegation, I am proud to be of service to such distinguished citizens. May you be richly blessed

Council members were unhappy with the plan to place the complex in Raleigh's Southeast corner, an area which is home to a number of other public housing projects. ASA and many council members — including Nooe — agreed that an alternative site off Sunnybrook Road be used instead. She moved that city support for the project be granted on the condition that the Sunnybrook Site be used.

However, HUD guidelines do not allow for amendments to a site plan until *after* initial approval from HUD. And — in a bureaucratic Catch 22 — HUD's approval was dependent on city certification.

"We had attempted to find property in other parts of the city but were not able to before we filed the initial application," according to Sally Wade.

By "suitable," Wade said that HUD considers many criteria in approving a site for Section 811 housing, including accessibility to shopping, public transportation and medical care, as well as proper zoning — in this case R-10, or ten units per acre. Most such projects are developed in urban areas, and in Raleigh such land is scarce.

According to Wade, ASA plans to continue in its efforts to provide housing for PWAs. Sadly, it is unlikely that federal money will be available in the near future. Recent federal cuts resulted in the consolidation of the Section 811 program with two other programs with a significant reduction in funding.

as your strive to perfect that which God has bestowed upon you."

Bullock stressed how honored she felt to have been asked to speak. A graduate of East Carolina University, she had performed in gay and lesbian nightclubs in the early days of her career.

Bullock, who starred in *Speed* and the current release *The Net*, said in her letter, "Congratulations! And it's about time! As a true advocate of cultural and human diversity, I applaud all of your efforts in instituting the first-ever gay pride celebration in Greenville, NC."

"I want to acknowledge you for your commitment and for all your hard work in organizing an event that promises to provide a place where all individuals are free to express themselves, free from prejudice, and free to be human.

Mayor Jenkins extended greetings and mentioned local attractions in Greenville and Pitt County.

Clayton and Bullock had been asked to speak at the Festival. Both declined because of schedule conflicts. Bullock is currently filming her next film *A Time to Kill* in Mississippi.