

25th The FRONT PAGE

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Serving the Carolinas' Gay & Lesbian Communities Since 1979

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Edwards on LGBT Issues

Gathered by the Human Rights Campaign

FEDERAL MARRIAGE AMENDMENT

"I oppose gay marriage. I also oppose President Bush's attempt to amend the Constitution to ban gay marriage. Washington has no business playing politics with this issue. Marriage is left to the states today, and should remain with the states."

— 2/04, statement

"As I have long said, I believe gay and lesbian Americans are entitled to equal respect and dignity under our laws. While I personally do not support gay marriage, I recognize that different states will address this in different ways, and I will oppose any effort to pass an amendment to the United States Constitution in response to the Massachusetts decision."

— 11/03, statement

MARRIAGE

"I am not for gay marriage. I am for partner benefits."

— 2/03, MSNBC *Hardball*

RELATIONSHIP RECOGNITION

"I believe in the equal dignity of all Americans and support partnership benefits for gays and lesbians in long-term relationships. States should be free to decide if they want to create civil unions with benefits akin to marriage. If states establish these civil unions, then the federal government should respect their decision and offer benefits along these lines."

— 1/04, Associated Press

"I support partnership benefits for gay and lesbian couples in committed, long-term relationships."

— HRC Presidential Questionnaire

"It is time we put the prejudice behind us. Somehow, when you listen to the compelling stories of gay and lesbian people, it demystifies who they are, what they stand for, and how valuable they are in our communities. I believe we should work toward legal benefits."

— 2/00, Associated Press

DOMA

CLAYTON: Senator Edwards, you also oppose gay marriage?

EDWARDS: I do. I do. But can I..

CLAYTON: So why would you have opposed Rosie O'Donnell getting married today? Why does that make a difference? Why is that a

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Kerry Picks Edwards

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry selected former rival John Edwards to be his running mate, telling supporters he couldn't wait to see the North Carolina senator going "toe-to-toe with Dick Cheney."

By selecting Edwards, Kerry went with the smooth-talking Southern populist over more seasoned politicians in hopes of injecting vigor and small-town appeal to the Democratic ticket in the November election against President George W. Bush and Vice President Cheney.

Appearing together for the first time ever as running mates on the campaign trail, the dynamic Democratic ticket of John Kerry and John Edwards kicked off a four-day barnstorming tour across the United States on July 7.

Following an evening rally in Clearwater, Kerry and Edwards are set to visit New York, West Virginia, New Mexico and Edwards' home-state of North Carolina as they tour the country together through July 10.

"John Kerry and I share the same values and vision for America," Edwards said. "We both believe our country's best days are ahead of us, and that there's nothing America can't do, as a country and as a people, if we just put our minds to it."

Strong Support, Not a Leader

Kerry's record on gay issues is strongly supportive; as a cosponsor of the hate crimes legislation, the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), and AIDS legislation. However, he has seldom exercised leadership on those issues, perhaps due to his lack of seniority in the Senate and the willingness of others to take the lead.

Edwards opposes the Federal Marriage Amendment but, like Kerry, he believes that marriage is between a man and a woman and does not support same-sex marriage.

"The selection of Sen. Edwards solidifies the most pro-gay, pro-family ticket in the history of presidential politics," said Dave Noble, executive director of National Stonewall Democrats. It "greatly



White House hopefuls John Kerry & John Edwards, arrive at RDU Airport, Saturday, July 10, 2004. (AP Photo/Grant Halverson)

contrasts with a Republican ticket that insists on running a campaign that demeans our families and smears our community."

National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Executive Director Matt Foreman said, "John Kerry and John Edwards make up the most gay-supportive national ticket in American history. But, in order for them to win the enthusiastic support of the gay community, a critical part of their base, they will have to take a strong and bold stand on supporting our civil rights."

"We call upon Sen. Edwards to use his strong southern and populist roots and speak out against the ugly, divisive and anti-gay campaigns being waged all across the country in the guise of 'protecting' marriage," he added. "We need him to call these tactics what they are — partisan, debasing, and profoundly un-American."

Cheryl Jacques, president of the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), which has endorsed Kerry, called Edwards "steadfast in his support of our community." She cited his voting record and his appearance as the keynote speaker at a HRC fundraising dinner in Atlanta.

Last July HRC sponsored a presidential forum in Washington that drew seven of the nine democratic candidates and coverage on C-SPAN. The two who did not participate were perceived to be the most

conservative, Edwards and Florida Senator Bob Graham.

Jacques said that Edwards had a scheduling conflict; he was meeting with the Congressional Black Caucus in southern state. "As a former office holder myself, I can tell you that it happens all the time."

"It's a good choice," said Kenneth Sherrill, a professor of political science at Hunter College in New York City. "It offers a sharp contrast to Cheney" in terms of age and vitality.

"Edwards was a stupendous candidate in the primaries" and that is the best training ground for running in a national campaign, Sherrill said. His training as a trial lawyer will make Edwards "an effective attack dog," a role traditionally played by the vice presidential candidate.

"I think he is a terrific choice," said Chicago political consultant Michael Bauer, who helped with Edward's primary campaign. "He is dynamic, articulate, incredibly bright, and he will certainly energize the Democratic base."

Bauer believes the selection will put much of the South into play and at the very least will force the Bush campaign to devote more resources to that region. It might even be enough to swing North Carolina into the Democratic column.

The new team will be challenged

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