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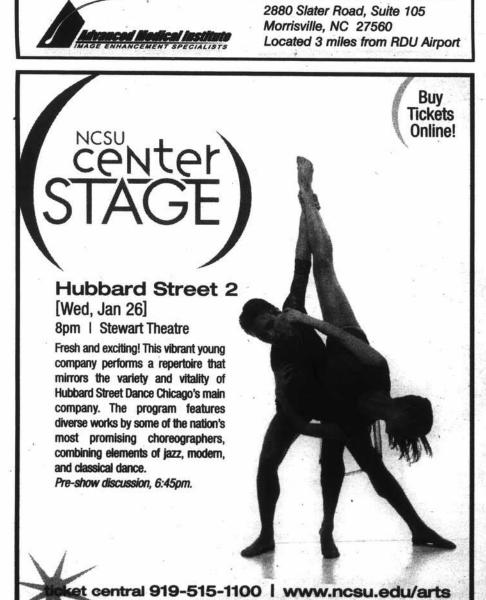
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Report Shows Voters Support Legislators Opposing Discrimination

We hope this

information will help

legislators recognize

that they can do the

right thing without

damaging their

chances of reelection.

Study supports Equality NC's case against antiLGBT constitutional amendment

WASHINGTON – State legislators who voted against marriage discrimination against gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people in 2004 state legislatures were not hurt by their votes when they sought re-election, according to a new study released today by the Equality Federation and the Human Rights Campaign. The study will bolster efforts in North Carolina to defeat anti-LGBT legislation, according to Equality

News reports leading up to and following the 2004 elections often suggested that same-sex marriage rights cost many legislators their seats, as many

voters went to the polls on "moral values." However, the study released today challenges that characterization.

"This study is a reminder that people who support equality for all families and couples are also moral values voters," said Toni Broaddus, Executive Director of the Equality Federation. "As the debate about how to protect all families

continues in the states, legislators should be confident that they can vote for equality without fear for their jobs."
"Voting against discrimination is

"Voting against discrimination is good policy and good politics," said Seth Kilbourn, HRC's national field director. "Anyone trying to score political points by discriminating against same-sex couples should be put on notice. Prejudice does not win at the polls."

The topline results of the study concluded:

In 2004, legislators in 28 states cast votes on proposed bills, constitutional amendments and resolutions that dealt specifically with the right of same-sex couples to marry. Legislators in 22 of these 28 states faced the voters in November.

Eight hundred and eighty-one legislators in these 22 states cast votes opposing discrimination. Of those 881 legislators, 640 faced re-election in 2004.

The remainder did not seek re-election, were not up for re-election, ran for other offices or were subject to term limits.

Of the 640 legislators for whom the issue of marriage could have factored into their election, 604 won.

In the races of the 36 legislators who lost, the legislator's vote against discrimination was cited as a factor in only 11 races.

Only 1.7 percent of state legislators running for re-election lost their race because of their vote against banning marriage for same-sex couples.

Ninety-four percent of legislators who voted against discrimination were re-elected. This re-election rate is consistent with or higher than the average rate of re-election for all state legislators which is 90 percent for state House incumbents and 92 percent of state Senate incumbents.

With the North Carolina General Assembly convening on January 26, Equality North Carolina will use the data in this report to help convince legislators to vote for fairness for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender citizens, and to oppose any attempts to write discrimination into the state constitution.

Equality North Carolina successfully blocked an anti-LGBT amendment in

2004 that would have denied same-sex couples access to any type of relationship recognition. The group expects a similar proposal to be introduced this year, and says it may be more difficult to stop.

stop.

"This report confirms our experience here in North Carolina," said Ian P a l m q u i s t, Executive Director – Programs of

Equality North Carolina. "Although North Carolina's proposed anti-LGBT amendment did not come to a vote in either house, our analysis indicates that no incumbent legislators lost their seats due to opposition to the amendment."

"We hope this information will help legislators recognize that they can do the right thing without damaging their chances of reelection."

Equality North Carolina is a statewide advocacy organization that works to secure equal rights and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender North Carolinians. Equality North Carolina is a member of Equality Federation. For more information, visit www.equalitync.org.

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The Equality Federation is a national coalition of statewide lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender advocacy organizations, working to secure full civil rights in every U.S. state and territory. For more information, visit www.equalityfederation.org.

The Human Rights Campaign is the largest national lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender political organization with members throughout the country. It effectively lobbies Congress, provides campaign support and educates the public to ensure that LGBT American can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community. For more information, visit www.hrc.org.