

WILBUR
HQ
75
097

out in the mountains

VERMONT'S NEWSPAPER for LESBIANS and GAY MEN

UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT

Vol. 2, No. 4

May, 1987

MAY 4 1987

H.247 Sent Back to Committee

H. 247, the sexual orientation anti-discrimination bill introduced into the Vermont House of Representatives in February, was voted favorably out of the House Judiciary Committee by a 7-4 margin on April 3. The bill was taken to the full House on April 8, where it was voted to send it for further hearings and consideration by the House General and Military Affairs Committee.

Vi Luginbuhl (R- South Burlington) introduced the bill onto the House floor and gave a detailed statement of support based on testimony heard by the Judiciary Committee. It was then moved to send the bill to the General and Military Affairs Committee, after John Murphy (D- Ludlow), chairperson of that committee, formally made that request and noted that his committee

had voted 5 - 3 in favor of accepting this bill. Conservatives in the House attempted to defeat this move and force a vote on the bill by the full House.

According to both supporters and opponents of this bill, had a vote been forced, the bill probably would have failed badly. This was due primarily to intensive phone lobbying by Eagle Forum members and their allies over the preceding week.

Howard Russell of VLGR and the Vermont Coalition of Lesbians and Gay Men said, "A lot of support evaporated over the last few days before the vote was scheduled. Legislators were getting intensive pressure from these people and a lot of them indicated that they were switching their votes or at least leaning towards switching their votes simply because of the politics involved."

There was disagreement among supporters of this bill as to whether they wanted this bill to be sent to committee again or they wanted a full House debate and vote. Some supporters wanted house members to be forced to stand up on one side or the other on this issue. However, Representative Mique Glitman (D-Burlington), primary sponsor of H. 247, said "we were afraid that by having the vote now, we would have seen a lot of potential supporters voting 'no' on this bill, and once you've forced a legislator to make a public stand on an issue like this, it's much harder to get them to change that." She went on to note that in Wisconsin, the only state that currently has civil rights legislation for lesbians and gay men, they never brought their bill up for a vote in the full house until they knew they had the votes to pass it.

continued, page 2

Interview: GLSA and UVM

On March 9, the University of Vermont became the twenty eighth school in the nation to pass a non-discrimination policy that protects people of alternative sexual orientation. The passage of this legislation was the result of several semesters of research and lobbying on the part of members of the gay alliance at UVM. The following is a joint interview between Mimi Desouza, who was responsible for getting the policy finally passed, and Sarah Coy, a member of the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Alliance at UVM.

Q: Whose idea was it to introduce the non-discrimination clause and how did they go about it?

A: When GLSA (Gay, Lesbian Student Association) was re-introduced on campus in 1984, the gay community at that time was small and unstable. One of the founding members, whose name I can't reveal, decided that UVM had a need for a non-discrimination policy. The woman met with the Dean of Students, Keith Miser, and encouraged him to research the process for changing the existing ND clause. She introduced me to Keith at that time so I

could continue work with him the following year, 1985. Together we investigated how changes needed to be made. At that time the only schools that protected gays were the Ivys and a few large state schools. During the divestment issue of 1986, the policy was pushed by the wayside. I was angered that UVM's administration was incapable of dealing with two important issues simultaneously. I feel that they went with divestment because it was more sensational and it was easier to ignore the behind the scenes problems.

In the Fall of 1986, I was elected a Student Association Senator and I used my position to get the ball rolling again. Everybody had kept stalling because there was such a lack of organization in dealing with policy changes. However, in the fall Keith sent out surveys to schools with ND clauses to get information on how they conducted their changes, and the senate conducted a VSOP (VT Student Opinion Poll) which showed that over 60% of UVM students supported the policy change. In February of 1987 the policy changes were made in the Faculty Senate and the Staff

continued, page 2

Table of Contents

Letters to the Editor	3
Caring and Sharing	3
Mother's Day	4
Book Review	5
H.247 Lobbying	6
H.247 Testimony	6
Media Watch	7
UVM Sexuality Course	8
Body Works	10
March on D.C.	11
Dear Gert & Alice	11
VT Resources	12

Memorial Day

Remember those
who have fallen
from AIDS.