

# itics politics politics politics politics

## Back to the House Again

*This article was compiled from information submitted by Keith Goslant and D. Curtis*

A sexual orientation anti-discrimination bill is slated to be introduced into the Vermont House of Representatives by early February. The bill would amend existing statutes to protect all Vermonters from discrimination based on sexual orientation, similar to the one that passed the Senate but died in the House last year.

Vi Luginbuhl (R-So. Burlington), has agreed to be the lead sponsor in the House and she is in the process of securing co-sponsors, many of whom co-sponsored last year's bill. Sen. Sally Conrad (D-Chittenden), chair of the Senate Health and Welfare Committee, has agreed to lead the effort in the Senate.

It is anticipated that bill will be assigned to the House Judiciary Committee, where it will face its first hurdle. The committee is under the new leadership of chair Amy Davenport, a past supporter of the bill. Proponents continue to warn, however, of a possible attempt by opponents to refer the bill to a hostile committee where it can be bottled up for the rest of the session and never acted upon.

One significant difference in the House this year is the new Democratic leadership favorable to the bill. Both Francis Brooks of Montpelier and Micque Glitman of Burlington supported the bill last session.

In the Senate, although there has been a significant turnover in makeup of the body, strong support for the bill has been voiced by both old and new senators. One consideration which weighed against introduction into the Senate was that the new chair of the Judiciary Committee, Sen. Bloomer (D-Rutland) voted against the bill last year.

Briefly, this bill would extend the protections in the non-discrimination clauses of twelve Vermont statutes to include sexual orientation. Vermont law currently protects against discrimination based on race, sex, religion, national origin, marital status, or handicap. The statutes that would be amended include housing, public and private employment, divorce custody, insurance, credit, real estate sales and public accommodation including education. The bill would also allow granting of a temporary restraining order in instances of same sex domestic violence.

### What You Can Do:

1. Call or write your legislators. If you don't know who they are, call either Holly or Keith, liaisons to the Governor (#s on the back page). If you can't identify yourself, let your legislator know the costs of not remaining anonymous.

2. Invite your legislator to meet with a small group of constituents in an informal setting. Discuss with them the discrimination that occurs in their district.

3. Ask family and friends to write letters of support. If you belong to a community organization, ask for their support.

4. Be an area contact/coordinator to distribute information to our community about hearings and progress of the bill. If

you are interested, contact either Holly or Keith.

5. House Judiciary Committee:  
Chair: Amy Davenport

D-Montpelier

Vice Chair: Robert Paolini

D-Waterbury

Paul Cillo D-Hardwick

Pamela Crispe R-Brattleboro

George Dunsmore R-Georgia

Elmer Faris R-Barnet

Sally Fox D-Essex

Micque Glitman D-Burlington

James McMullan R-Milton

Ruth Stokes R-Williston

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