

# Sanders & Carroll

Continued from page 1

continue his fight for a single payer national health care system, an end to childhood poverty, and an increase in the minimum wage.

Bernie Sanders has been a longtime supporter of Vermont's lesbian and gay community. As Mayor of Burlington, Sanders issued a proclamation observing Pride Day in spite of the City Council's opposition. Since serving in the House, Sanders has co-sponsored two federal

ills that would prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and supported President Clinton's attempt to lift the military ban. The Employment Non-Discrimination Act of 1994 (ENDA) would prohibit employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation while the more comprehensive Civil Rights Act of 1993 would prohibit discrimination in all areas including employment, education, credit, housing and public accommodations. Sanders' co-sponsorship of these two bills and positive voting record regarding other lesbian and gay issues has earned him a 100% grade by both the Human Rights Campaign Fund and the National Gay & Lesbian Task Force.

When asked to describe issues of interest to Vermont's lesbian and gay community, Sanders replied, "By and large I think they are exactly the same issues of concern to the American people.". Sanders cited the AIDS crisis, rhetorical gay bashing by the Christian Right, and discrimination as issues of special concern to lesbians and gay men. In summarizing his message to readers of OITM, Sanders said, "It is imperative that all progressive people come together around a progressive agenda, which must include gay and lesbian rights, if we are going to be able to provide a decent life for all of our people."

Liberal on social issues and fiscally conservative, Republican State Senator and businessman John Carroll hopes to foster a bi-partisan approach to problem solving in Washington. Carroll's empowerment agenda includes job creation, improving the quality of America's schools, balancing the federal budget, and the redirection of military research and technological capabilities to the private sector. Carroll supports an

incremental approach to health care reform, welfare reform, and meaningful deficit reduction.

Voting for Hate Crimes legislation and the Gay Rights Bill while serving in the Vermont Senate, John Carroll has been an ally of Vermont's lesbian and gay community. Carroll stated that he would co-sponsor national civil rights legislation prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation nationwide. In addition to issues faced by many Vermonters, Carroll views "prejudice, manifest or not" as a key problem faced by lesbians and gay men. "There are times when government is to be the great teacher," Carroll said when explaining his vote for Vermont's nondiscrimination statute and his view of the role of Congress in combatting prejudice. In summarizing his message to OITM readers, Carroll concluded, "I want people to be dealt with solely on the basis of their integrity and their contribution to the well-being of all of us."

Both Bernie Sanders and John Carroll cite America's economic decline, decreased opportunities, health care reform, and job creation as key issues in the race for the U.S. House of Representatives. Faced with two candidates who have historically supported lesbian and gay issues and who both expressed a willingness to establish a co-liaison relationship with members of Vermont's lesbian and gay community, the race is likely to be decided on issues that truly separate the two. Position on the political spectrum, proposed solutions to national problems, perceived effectiveness, and personal answer to the question "who is better for Vermont?" will surely enter into voters' minds on November 8. ▼

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