

Dykes To Watch Out For

By Alison Bechdel

Portland Joins Ranks of Localities with Civil Rights Bills

The Portland Maine City Council passed an ordinance prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation by a 7-1 vote early in the morning of May 12. The vote came after several hours of testimony, mostly favorable, in front of a crowd of 400 people who packed the council chamber.

The ordinance prohibits discrimination in employment, housing, credit, and public accommodations. It is the first such legislation in Maine. A conservative religious group, the Christian Civic League, won a legal battle to place an anti-gay initiative on the November ballot in Maine if enough signatures can be collected. The initiative would block the state legislature from adopting any gay-positive legislation in the future. A statewide civil rights bill was defeated in the Maine legislature last spring after Governor John McKernan threatened to veto it. ▼

stunned

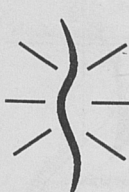
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