

Races to Watch Across the Country

Terje Anderson

While the presidential race grabs everyone's attention, numerous other elections across the country are important for the lesbian and gay community. Among the highlights:

The Oregon Referendum. Right wing extremists have put a proposed constitutional amendment on the ballot which would forbid the state of Oregon (or any city or county government in the state) from promoting the idea that homosexuality is a valid and acceptable lifestyle. It would forbid the passage of non-discrimination legislation at the state or local level, forbid government funds from supporting counseling or educational programs (such as AIDS education) that treat homosexuality as acceptable, and would require that schools and other institutions specifically teach that homosexuality is evil. Passage would result in removal of gay and lesbian positive books from libraries, a witchhunt of gay and gay-positive teachers, child care workers, and health care and mental health professionals, and similarly re-

strictive measures. The most comprehensive anti-gay measure to ever come to a vote, its passage in relatively liberal Oregon would be a chilling event for all of us. Polls indicate a tight race. A slightly milder version of the same idea will be voted on in Colorado. Columbia, Missouri and Portland, Maine will vote on efforts to repeal existing civil rights ordinances.

Gerry Studds re-election bid. Redistricting has dramatically changed the first openly gay member of Congress's district, and it looks like a very tight race is in store. Losing Studds, a respected and talented legislator who spends a great deal of time on AIDS and gay issues, would be a real loss for the community.

The women running for US Senate across the country. Currently only two women serve in the US Senate, but at least seven strong Democratic nominees may help increase that total, buoyed by the emergence of choice as a key issue

and memories of the Clarence Thomas/Anita Hill hearings in the Senate. All of these women are pro-lesbian and gay and would increase the number of Senate co-sponsors of the national civil right bill. Key races to watch: Lynn Yeakel's effort to unseat Arlen Specter in Pennsylvania, Carol Mosley Braun's run to become the first African-American woman in the Senate, and the twin candidacies of Diane Feinstein and Barbara Boxer in California's unusual two Senate contests.

The high number of retirements, re-districting, and public disgust with Congress is expected to produce the largest turnover ever in the House of representatives. A record number of women and racial minorities is expected to win seats, although the transfer of seats to population growth sunbelt states may result in the election of more conservatives as well. Lobbyists are optimistic that the new Congress will be more friendly to our concerns than ever before. ▼

Health Resource Organizations

AIDS HOTLINES:

Vermont	1-800-882-2437
New Hampshire	1-800-752-2437
New York State	1-800-541-2437
Massachusetts	1-617-522-4090
Maine	1-800-851-2437
National	1-800-342-2437
Canadian	1-613-563-2437

AIDS Community Awareness Project (ACAP)

PO Box 608
St. Johnsbury VT 05819
(802) 748-1149

AIDS Community Resource Network (ACoRN)

PO Box 2057
Lebanon NH 03766
(603) 448-2220

Bennington Area AIDS Project

PO Box 1066
Bennington VT 05201
(802) 442-4481 or 1-800-845-2437

Brattleboro AIDS Project

67 Main Street
Brattleboro VT 05302
(802) 254-4444 (Helpline)
(802) 254-8263 (Office)

Franklin-Grand Isle AIDS Task Force

8 Ferris Street
St. Albans VT 05478 • (802) 524-7742
1-800-638-7834

Gay/Lesbian Alcoholics Anonymous

GLAA, P.O. Box 5653
Burlington, VT 05402

H.E.A.L. Vermont (Holistic Education and AIDS Alternatives Liaison)

PO Box 795
Montpelier VT 05602 • (802) 229-4325

Lesbian Cancer Support Group

(802) 660-8386

Northeast Kingdom AIDS Coalition

PO Box 40
Newport VT 05855 • (802) 334-2437

North Star (Holistic Health Care)

RR2 Box 3255
Morrisville VT 05661 • (802) 888-2858

Vermont AIDS Council

PO Box 275
Montpelier VT 05601 • (802) 229-2557

Vermont C.A.R.E.S.

(Committee for AIDS Resources, Education, and Services)
PO Box 5248
30 Elmwood Avenue
Burlington VT 05401
(802) 863-2437 (Burlington)
1-800-649-2437 (Rutland and Washington County support groups)

Vermont Department of Health

1-800-882-2437 (AIDS Hotline) or
(802) 863-7245 (AIDS Program office)

VT PWA Coalition

PO Box 1055
Brattleboro, VT 05502
1-800-69-VTPWA or (802) 257-9277

Vermont Women's Health Center

336 North Avenue
Burlington VT 05401 • (802) 863-1386