

Flanagan Announces U.S. Senate Candidacy

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trouble, there is usually either compromised services or tax dollar waste."

The only person who has filed to oppose Jeffords so far, Flanagan says that he would not "cooperate with the Republican leadership's agenda." He acknowledges the incumbent's record on matters concerning HIV and AIDS, but is confident that he will be stronger on every issue concerning the GLBT community. "When Senator Lott dares to say that we are sick and need help, I will raise my voice strongly and clearly."

Although he has never hidden his sexual orientation, in 1995 the behavior of national officials moved him to be more vocal. "Jesse Helms was saying that the victims of AIDS should be punished and Dick Arney was calling Congressman Frank 'Barney Fag.' That tipped me over the edge," he says. He made a decision to publicly come out. "I thought it was very important to offer the public a personification — offer them a face — as an example of what the gay community is."

His re-election as auditor in 1996 made him the first openly gay person elected to a statewide office in the United States. Despite his proud stance, he says his candidacy is not about his sexual orientation. He believes that Vermonters accept that and are anxious to deal with other issues.

He emphasizes the need for coalition building with other minority constituencies around issues such as retirement, health care, and childcare. "I think it's in these areas that this election will be decided." ▼

Jeffords Recognized for HIV/AIDS Record

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White Foundation. AIDS Action is also recognizing the efforts of Starbucks and the congressional Black Caucus.

Founded in 1984, AIDS Action is the only organization singularly dedicated to responsible federal policy for improved care and service and robust medical research and effective prevention.

This is the group's ninth National Leadership Awards ceremony. Past award winners include Vice President and Tipper Gore, Randy Shilts, HBO, and *USA Today*. ▼

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Cheryl Wheeler

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Letters continued

could not be any lower - GET THIS WASTE OF SPACE OUT OF MONTPELIER!!!

David Horn
N Troy, VT

Sticks and Stones Break Bones; Name-Calling Breaks Us

Editor:

Recently, a disagreement became violent in the parking lot of the University Mall, resulting in the stabbing of a young man by a peer. Immediately prior to slashing his victim's throat, the perpetrator called him a faggot. This is not a bias crime, since the victim does not identify, not was her perceived as actually being gay, bisexual, or transgendered, but it should be unsettling to the gay community just the same.

We need to pay attention to the message this sends. The assailant chose more than one supposedly derogatory remark to throw that night, but the final one, the one that dehumanized his peer enough to cut into his flesh was faggot. Applying this label to the other young man, even if he did not actually believe he was gay, demonstrates this boy's complete disregard for the sanctity of the life of gays and

lesbians. Society would side with him.

We are still being treated as sub-human. Our subjugation does not always end in violence, but it is still happening. We are discriminated against in hiring, firing, and compensation. Our partnerships are not recognized by law. Our children are taken away.

With no laws to assert our full citizenship, we are denied our rights to life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, not to mention security, safety, and privacy. Don't ask, don't tell is being used to push us down and out in the military, but I'm beginning to think we have internalized this idea. We are not asking the questions we should of our leaders, preachers and neighbors. Not enough of us are asking for equal civil right. It seems we too our deciding not to ask, or tell, not to acknowledge the true picture of our lives. In light of this, how can we expect to be told what we want to hear?

Maybe other people are satisfied with the limited inclusion of gay issues in the media and on the political agendas. Tinky-Winky is certainly my biggest focus as a lesbian. Maybe other people are content with the rights we have. Lack of employment protection and the right to mar-

riage is apparently not important, or as important as children's television. Or, maybe we have just become complacent, allowing our apathy to silence us.

No matter what the cause is of our silence, we must end it. We must use our voices, and make our cause be heard. Not all name calling is harmless. We must remember what we are fighting for. We are fighting for our lives.

Morgan Sheets
Burlington, VT

Marshfield Resident Displays Excellent Taste

Editor:

We have never met — you don't know me at all — but I wanted to write to tell you my full admiration and gratitude to you all for the *Out in the Mountains* publication. I'm an ancient 74-year-old lesbian in central Vermont and I find myself sending clippings from *Out in the Mountains* to friends everywhere. All thanks and all great and continued success and happiness, too.

Susan Weaver
Marshfield, VT

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