

# GLAADAlert

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educational plights and more do not figure into the piece, in spite of the fact that those battles have garnered much of the attention the community now receives.

This is the second time in a month that National Review writers have shown such complete disregard for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender topics they've covered. Please let them know how you feel about their disrespect.

Contact: Ms. Linda Bridges, Managing Editor, National Review, 215 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10016, letters@nationalreview.com

## ■ GLAADAlert Round-Up: The Media Respond to Regional Politicking

In recent weeks, local anti-gay legislative measures across the nation have been the focus of supportive coverage in many media outlets. Here are some highlights:

Forrest Rose's July 6 column in the Columbia (Missouri) Daily Tribune reflected on the local Board of Education's decision to forbid discrimination based on sexual orientation in the schools - a new policy that has not come without controversy. Rose cites board members' linking of homosexuality to bestiality and pedophilia, and quotes one as saying: "If we pass this, Christian teachers can't talk about their life with Christ ... but gay teachers can talk about the joys of anal

sex!" Rose's response? "Those statements presume that straight teachers currently enjoy the right to lecture their classes on the most titillating of topics ... They don't talk about such things in class because they know they would be fired. What evidence do we have that gay teachers are stupider than straight ones?" And while Rose points out that antagonizing remarks have been made from both sides, his overall message is exemplified in the column's title: "School policy toward gays simplified: Do unto others."

Referring principally to Oregon's infamous Ballot Measure Number 9, which would have defined homosexuality as "abnormal, wrong, unnatural and perverse" and threatened all civil rights for lesbians and gay men, Oregon's Medford Mail-Tribune said in a July 2 editorial that "Oregonians rightly thought that our state had put anti-gay politicking behind us." But earlier in the week, a bill had passed in the State's House of Representatives that would prohibit same-sex marriage - one of a number of such bills popping up across the country. "Of course," it justly points out, "state law does not permit gay marriage now ... In other words, legislators dredged up this gay-bashing measure as a meaningless sop to hard-right conservatives." The paper asserts its own opinion clearly: "We urge the Senate to weigh the human costs against the solely political benefits of this measure, and

spare us a repeat of Oregon's ugly anti-gay nineties."

The Idaho Press-Tribune examines a ballot initiative aimed at denying "special rights" for lesbians and gay men in a sharply-written July 8 editorial. "The only problem," the paper says, is that "homosexuals do not currently enjoy any 'special rights.' And everybody knows it will be a cold day in you-know-where before the most Republican legislature in the country lavishes 'special rights' on this frequently demonized minority ... And yet [the initiative's sponsors] continue to stir up negative emotions - including hate - in their efforts." The Press-Tribune dismantles the explicitly political motivations behind the initiative, and concludes that its sponsors' "behavior is a major reason so many of us are so disgusted by politics." In the end, the editorial makes a call to political leaders: "Raise your sights from the gutter of confrontational politics to the heights of cooperative problem-solving. If we find positive efforts in which to invest our energies, then we'll all benefit. If not, then start holding your nose. It's going to be a long - and ugly - 18 months to the next election."

On July 8, Massachusetts' Supreme Judicial Court invalidated Boston Mayor Thomas Menino's executive order extending domestic partner benefits to city employees. According to the Court, those persons eligible to receive insurance benefits are strictly defined by existing laws; laws that do not include same-sex partners. Therefore, Menino's order cannot be upheld. The Boston Globe's July 9 report on the subject was strong, but its edi-

torial the same day was particularly compelling. The piece highlights the Court's call for the Legislature to amend the laws that preclude provision of benefits, based on its recognition that health insurance is a "critical social necessity." And the Globe concurs: "The central issue remains one of simple equity. Most jurisdictions are not yet willing to legalize same-sex marriages, so gay and lesbian couples are denied benefits that go automatically to married couples. Yet they cannot legally take the step that would qualify them." While the Globe describes a number of "enlightened businesses" offering domestic partnership benefits, the editorial closes: "The Boston employees ... will likely lose those benefits until state law changes ... This should be done as quickly as possible. The equity is clear; so, too, is the need."

Please thank the Daily Tribune, the Mail-Tribune, the Press-Tribune, and the Boston Globe for providing their readers with lucidity and insight on the legislative issues facing their respective communities.

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## ■ Dolce & Gabbana Put Out, Again

Following up on its gay-themed ad from earlier this year, D&G (a product line owned by Dolce & Gabbana) has placed another full-page advertisement in next month's Interview magazine that depicts an interracial same-sex couple with candor and beauty. This new ad captures two young men of color (Asian and Latino) embracing one another and sporting matching wedding bands. The matter-of-fact statement made by the image is one of simple affection and love, taking their previous ad campaign to the next level.

Dolce & Gabbana, the worldwide fashion company headed by openly gay Italian designers Domenico Dolce and Stefano Gabbana, has had a huge gay following for nearly a decade. The ad was photographed by renowned fashion photographer Steven Meisel, who cast the two models. To view the ad visit: <http://www.glaad.org/glaad/alert/images/d&g.gif>.

Please thank D&G (and Steven Meisel) for highlighting the committed relationships of many same-sex couples, for marketing directly to a large segment of their customer base, and for including diverse representations of the community.

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