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The Wisconsin Light

Lawmakers Claim AIDS Definition Ignores Women

[Madison]- The Bush Administration is reviewing a proposal by Wisconsin legislators to change the definition of AIDS as it relates to women, who now make up the fastest-growing population of people with AIDS.

Rep. David Clarenbach (D-Madison) and seventeen other lawmakers have sent President Bush a letter pointing out that women are not accurately represented in national statistics on AIDS. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) definition of AIDS does not include infections that are specifically related to women.

Among those who signed the letter are: Speaker of the Assembly Walter Kunicki, Health Committee Chair Rep. Tim Carpenter, Health Committee Vice Chair Rep. Peter Bock, Rep. Marcia Coggins and Rep. Barbara Notestein.

"The CDC definition continues to be centered in how AIDS is manifested in men and ignores the anatomical differences between men and women," the letter states. "Women's first HIV-related symptoms are often gynecological; thus a different disease profile occurs for women than for men."

Clarenbach said it is often more difficult for women than for men to qualify for HIV assistance, since government policies are based on a CDC definition that does not include gynecological manifestations of HIV disease.

The letter calls on the CDC to revise its definition of AIDS, and to institute a system to regularly revise its surveillance definition to include newly discovered or developing opportunistic diseases in all affected people.

In response, the White House said the Department of Health and Human Services would review the request.

"The President shares your concern over the tragic toll that AIDS has taken on women," wrote Mary McClure, a special assistant to the President.

Clarenbach called for a quick response by the Bush Administration.

"Women are the fastest-growing population of people with AIDS," Clarenbach said. "Once diagnosed, they become sicker faster and die sooner than men with AIDS."

"The government's failure to come to grips with this reality adds another tragic dimension to the AIDS epidemic — doubly tragic, since this is something that could easily be corrected," Clarenbach said.

Wisconsin Supreme Court Denies Visitation Rights To Lesbian

[Madison, WI] - In a 5-2 decision rendered on June 26, the Wisconsin Supreme Court upheld a lower court ruling that a Lesbian could be denied visitation rights to a child adopted by her former partner.

The court said that Wendy L. Sporleder, of Appleton, lacked proper legal standing to gain visitation rights to the boy who was adopted by Janice A. Hermes in 1988.

Hermes had adopted the boy after Sporleder's attempts at artificial insemination were unsuccessful. The women were together for seven years before their break-up, after which Hermes prohibited Sporleder from seeing the child.

Just before their relationship ended, both women signed a three page agreement declaring that the adoption was a joint decision and that they would share custody of the child. But the court ruled that contract unenforceable.

"The rights to custody and visitation are controlled by statutory and case law, and cannot be determined by contract," the decision read.

"There is no allegation that Hermes is either unfit or unable to care for [the boy], and Sporleder has not established that

Rep. Steve Gunderson Is Target Of "Outing" By Activists

Clarenbach Wins Endorsement From The Human Rights Campaign Fund

[Madison]- State Representative David Clarenbach has won a major, early endorsement for the Democratic nomination for Congress in Wisconsin's Second District.

The Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF) has announced its endorsement of Clarenbach (D-Madison) in the September, 1992 Democratic Congressional primary.

"I am delighted to accept this vote of confidence," Clarenbach said. "The Human Rights Campaign Fund's endorsement is another of the many encouraging signs that there is broad support for me to seek the Democratic Congressional nomination." The Human Rights Campaign Fund is a leading national political organization active in the fight against AIDS and against discrimination based on sexual orientation. It also advocates public health legislation such as universal health insurance, family and medical leave, and reproductive freedom of choice.

In making the endorsement, HRCF officials stressed Clarenbach's legislative skill, experience and political foresight.

"David became an advocate for Gay

and Lesbian civil rights during the early 1970's, when even mild support for the cause was difficult to come by," said Tim McFeeley, HRCF's Executive Director.

"Not only was he an early advocate, but he has been a remarkable effective one. Consider Wisconsin's landmark Gay and Lesbian civil rights law, its ban on discrimination against people with AIDS, its law against hate crimes. Passing any one of these laws would be a major accomplishment. For David to have authored them all, and much more, testifies to his rare legislative talent," McFeeley said.

The HRCF endorsement includes a \$5,000 contribution toward Clarenbach's primary campaign.

Clarenbach, the Speaker Pro Tem of the Assembly, is expected to seek the House seat held until last January by Rep. Robert W. Kastenmeier (D-Sun Prairie).

A veteran of nearly 20 years in elective office, Clarenbach, 37, has been elected to the Assembly since 1974. He chairs the Special Committee on Reform of Health Insurance, and the Subcommittee on the Future of Family Farming.

Milwaukee Bar Owners Join Fight To Protect Patrons From Bashings

[Milwaukee]- According to a La Cage customer survey, 100% of 200 respondents so far feel safe inside the bar. But 90% think they are unsafe nearby the club.

The survey is being taken by George Prentice, owner of La Cage. While the survey is not complete — Prentice hopes for 700-1,000 respondents — the preliminary results have taken him aback as he told those attending a meeting on July 8, sponsored by the Lambda Rights Network and Queer Nation.

The meeting, attended by 11 people, was held in the Milwaukee Public Library first floor conference room and was chaired by Scott Gunkel. Among those there were the owners of La Cage, Partners and the 3 B's.

compelling reasons exist for awarding custody," wrote Justice William Callow.

Before the decision came down, Shelley Gaylord, Sporleder's attorney, said: "My priority is to get parental and parental-like relationships recognized regardless of sexual orientation."

Attorney Dan Cross, who represented Hermes, argued that nothing in state law or previous Supreme Court rulings suggested that "taking on parental responsibility gives the rights of parents." He called it "a classic example of where it is not appropriate for the state to intervene."

The case drew nationwide attention from Gay rights groups who hoped it might create a precedent. The National Center for Lesbian Rights and the Lambda Legal Defense and Education Fund filed a joint brief supporting Sporleder's position.

The Wisconsin decision joins similar rulings in New York and California which also denied custody and/or visitation rights to the Lesbian partners of biological mothers.

Hermes currently resides in Combined Locks in Outagamie County, where she lives with another woman who is again co-parenting her child.

Aldersperson Mary Ann McNulty was expected to attend, but was not there. She did not attend the two previous meetings.

Gunkel reported that Mayor John Norquist's office is "very interested" and has been very cooperative.

The meeting was the third of three convened to discuss ways to counteract the incidents of anti-Gay/Lesbian violence.

Prentice said he thought the "perception of danger was greater than the reality." Still, he said, the perception was there, it was real and something had to be done to correct it.

Discussion was given to the future establishment of patrols in the area. However, Prentice and Jim Balistreri of Partners pointed out the problems involved with such patrols, including liability. Untrained people patrolling the streets, Prentice maintained, "could become part of the problem."

Instead, Prentice opted for the idea of the bars in the area of La Cage (2nd and National) cooperating in hiring professional security people. Uniformed security, he said, was "prevention," adding that police tend to pay more attention when called by security people.

That idea is currently being acted upon. Prentice said later that the security people would be in place "in a week" and, as of press time, he had already begun to contact the other bar owners in the area.

Other steps to beef up the security of bar patrons and prevent vandalism are being taken as well.

The Boot Camp already has security persons in its parking lot on weekends.

An "aggressive awareness program" is being established. This will include posters, articles in the Gay press, announcements in the bars and other measures to help customers maintain their safety.

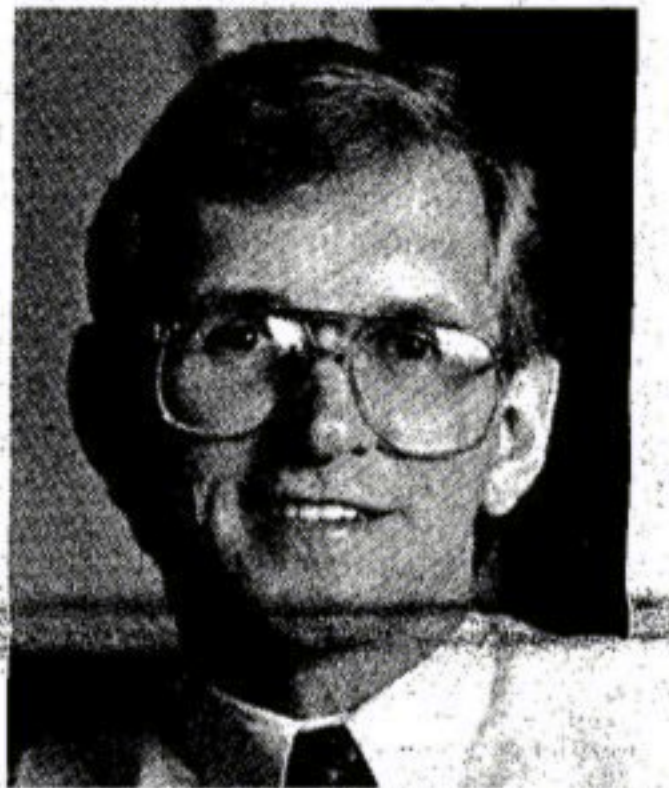
Pat Prudlow of the 3 B's said that he and another bartender regularly walk customers to their cars.

In addition, there is free coffee at Partners — "365 days a year" according to Jim Balistreri, for anyone who asks for it. The same is true for La Cage, the

[Washington, D.C.] - Steve Gunderson (R-WI, 3rd Dist.) was the target of heavy "outing" over the July 4th weekend.

The 3rd District includes much of western Wisconsin including the cities of Eau Claire, La Crosse, Platteville and Prairie du Chien.

According to the *Milwaukee Journal*, On the evening of June 30, 1991, Gunderson was in a restaurant/bar in Alexandria, VA at 808 King St. The bar is known as The French Quarter and according to the owner, Murray Greenberg, is a Gay bar with 50 percent of the dinner crowd being straight. According to Gunderson's press attache, Jennifer Koberstein, Gunderson was



REP. STEVE GUNDERSON

having dinner. He was accosted by a man later identified as Michael Petrelis.

Petrelis is a member of Queer Nation/D.C., publishes a sporadic newsletter called *Piss And Vinegar*, his primary outing vehicle and is a long-time proponent of outing.

Petrelis said he had received word that Gunderson was at the French Quarter. Petrelis had previously named Gunderson as a closeted Gay Congressman who was not a sponsor of the Gay/Lesbian Civil Rights Bill.

According to the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, Gunderson's voting record on issues important to Lesbians and Gays and AIDS legislation is 94 percent favorable in the last Congress.

According to Petrelis, he found Gunderson in the bar area on the second floor of the French Quarter. Petrelis says he introduced himself and began a conversation about coming out and supporting Gay rights legislation.

At one point, Gunderson allegedly responded to Petrelis, "I am out! I'm in a Gay bar, aren't I?" Koberstein denied that Gunderson had made those remarks.

Petrelis says he began chanting "Come Out, Gunderson, Come Out!" and threw a drink on his chest. Other reports say it was thrown in the Congressman's face. Koberstein told *Light* that Gunderson said that Petrelis was "practically hysterical." Koberstein said that Gunderson then turned and walked away, refusing to respond to the attack.

The manager and bartender called the police. Petrelis was not arrested and no police report was filed. Neither the manager nor the bartender was able to positively confirm that it was Gunderson who was the object of the attack. They were not sure what Gunderson looks like.

On July 4, Tim Campbell, a Gay activist and editor of the Minneapolis-based *GLC Voice* went to La Crosse, Wisconsin. According to Campbell, he went to confront Gunderson who was in the western Wisconsin city to be an honoree and featured speaker at a "Welcome Home the Troops Parade" and ceremony.

Campbell had prepared 2,000 hot pink