

FAIRNESS

C A M P A I G N

April
2009

2009 Victories in Frankfort:

Anti-Adoption Bill Defeated, Patients' Rights Bill Passes

The 2009 regular session of the Kentucky General Assembly was one of unprecedented victories and support for the LGBT community. The Fairness Campaign, together with a strong, diverse coalition of ally partners, successfully rallied Kentuckians across the state to oppose anti-adoption Senate Bill 68 (SB 68), a mean-spirited attack on foster children and LGBT families introduced by Shelbyville Sen. Gary Tapp, which would prohibit all unmarried couples—gay and straight—from fostering or adopting children in the commonwealth. The bill, as cited by a study of the Williams Institute at UCLA Law, would cost the state a sum of \$5.3 million in the first year alone, while annually leaving scores of Kentucky's over 2,000 adoptable children without a loving, stable home.

A carbon copy of Arkansas' successful 2008 ballot referendum, SB 68 should easily have passed Kentucky's conservative Senate; it would certainly seem to have been the leadership's intention when they secretly passed the bill out of a special meeting of the Senate's Judiciary committee without debate. When Fairness joined Rev. Todd Ekloff and students from Bellarmine University and Collegiate High School on the stairs leading to the Senate Tuesday, March 10, to oppose SB 68, we believed we had come to watch the attack legislation pass on the Senate floor; however, it was never called to a vote. Nor was the bill called the remainder of that week. The resounding public outcry we rallied against this irresponsible attack impacted Senate leadership enough to stall this bill at the Senate committee level—a remarkable victory for Fairness!



Kentuckians Value Fairness Rally in the Capitol Rotunda in Frankfort February 25

Furthermore, Louisville's Rep. Mary Lou Marzian was able to pass out of the House a bill of great importance to our community—House Bill 280, a piece of legislation allowing hospital visitation rights to anyone of a patient's choosing. When current medical facility policy limits visitation to all but "immediate family members," anyone in an LGBT relationship knows the fear of their partner being denied visitation rights in a time of medical need. Though the bill did not receive a Senate committee hearing, its almost unanimous passage in the House is a positive sign for the future.

Both Rep. Marzian and Sen. Kathy Stein of Lexington proposed statewide Fairness laws—House Bill 272 and Senate Bill 95, adding protection on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity to the state's anti-discrimination laws in employment, housing, and public accommodation. Both bills gathered co-sponsorship from several legislators—Senators Denise Harper Angel and Tim Shaughnessy added their names to SB 95, and Representatives Kelly Flood, Joni Jenkins, Reginald Meeks, Ruth Ann Palumbo, Jim Wayne, and Susan Westrom signed on to HB 272. By comparison, Sen. Gary Tapp's anti-adoption SB 68 did not receive a single co-sponsor. While neither of the statewide Fairness laws received a committee hearing, this is the first legislative session in recent history in which no anti-Fairness laws have been filed in the House – a sign of great progress by any measure.

Stopping SB 68, clear signs of other legislative progress, and the incredible success of the *Kentuckians Value Fairness* lobby and rally day in bringing hundreds of supporters to Frankfort is owed largely to the strong, diverse web of coalition partners joining us in this

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PLAN TO ATTEND

- ★ **Lambda Law Caucus presents *From Prop 8 to SB 68: Legislative Attacks on LGBT Families*** – April 7, Noon-1:30 p.m., UofL's Brandeis School of Law, free & open to the public.
- ★ **Benefit for Rev. Todd Ekloff's Legal Defense Fund** – April 11, 2-9 p.m., The Connection. Rev. Ekloff is pursuing a discrimination case against Kentucky Farm Bureau under Louisville's Fairness ordinance.
- ★ **PFLAG's Bruce & Margaret Lincoln Scholarship Awards Banquet** – April 19, 5 p.m., First Lutheran Church, 417 E. Broadway, Keynote speaker Dr. Stuart Urbach, \$10 minimum suggested donation.
- ★ **Discrimination and Response Committee (DART) meeting** – April 22, 6:30 p.m., Fairness office.
- ★ **Community Building Committee meeting** – April 23, 6:30 p.m., Fairness office.
- ★ **Legislative Session Debriefing and Celebration** – April 26, 3-5 pm, Fairness office, everyone's invited.
- ★ **Bent & I Am My Own Wife** – May 7-24, Pandora Productions, details at www.Pandora.org.
- ★ **Celluloid Broadway** – May 29 & 30, 8 pm, Voices of Kentuckiana, Clifton Center.
- ★ **Louisville Youth Group** – support and social group for LGBTQ youth 14 to 21, weekly meetings. 499-4427.
- ★ **Sienna** – transgender support/social group, monthly meetings. 894-1048.
- ★ **PFLAG** – Louisville - Monthly meeting, 3rd Sunday, 3 p.m., 1st Lutheran Church, 417 E. Broadway. 329-0229.

Victories in Frankfort

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fight. The full list of organizations participating in the *Kentuckians Value Fairness* rally is an impressive, regionally diverse collage of Fairness organizations, churches, adoptive associations, social workers, students and more. As we move forward to defeat the likely recurrence of an anti-adoption law in Kentucky, and lobby for statewide Fairness, we will work closely with our ally organizations to connect with legislators and constituents across the state in their home districts. We must find LGBT families, friends, and allies in every district of Kentucky if we hope to change the minds of legislators uncertain of their constituents' support for Fairness.

Please write your representatives and thank them if they supported us this year, and lobby the ones who did not. If we continue to unite with one voice across the state, we will stand strong in victory in 2010 and beyond!

Celebrate Our Victories in Frankfort

The 2009 legislative session saw several significant victories as a result of the continued development of close working relationships amongst allies in the progressive community. Organizers shared information and strategies, coordinated events and lobby days, and helped support one another's key legislative objectives. As we end this year's session of the General Assembly, we want to take time to review our successes and challenges at the Capitol. Fairness invites you to join us.

WHAT: Legislative Session Debriefing and Celebration

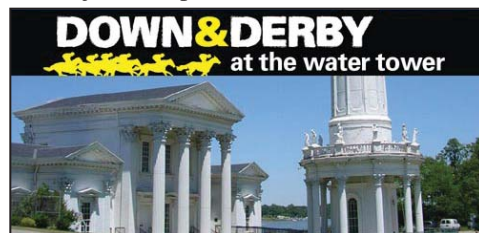
WHERE: Fairness Campaign office

WHEN: Sunday, April 26 - 3-5 PM

WHY: To provide time for citizen lobbyists and concerned supporters to:

- ★ share our experiences from the 2009 legislative session
- ★ enhance our ally communications
- ★ brainstorm further collaborations
- ★ celebrate our victories
- ★ strategize about our future work

Please join us April 26!



Down & Derby at the Water Tower, a festive new benefit to support the WINGS Clinic, an outpatient medical clinic for HIV+ people, and the Louisville AIDS Walk. The party begins Derby night at 8 p.m. and admission is \$20 cash at the door.

Director's Notes – The Power of Partnership

by *Chris Hartman*

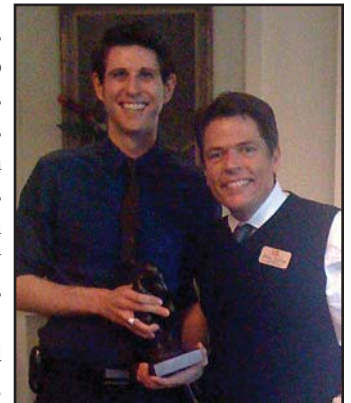
Recently, the University of Louisville's Office of LGBT Services, working under the direction of Brian Buford, reached out to the Fairness Campaign in a major way. Director Buford, alongside Dr. Mordean Taylor-Archer, Vice Provost for Diversity and Equal Opportunity, honored the university's relationship with the Fairness Campaign by hosting a reception at the school's University Club, held to welcome me to my new post. In a statement promoting the event, Director Buford wrote, "The reception will be a time to celebrate the bond between the university and the surrounding community, knowing that when we work for change in our community, we are also creating change on our campus," a sentiment of "progress through partnership" that resonates deeply with the Campaign following the defeat of Anti-Adoption Senate Bill 68 (SB 68), a victory owed largely to the powerful coalition of partners joining the Fairness Campaign to oppose the bill.

The Campaign's relationship with the university and it's LGBTQ student group, commonGround, has been integral to our victories in recent months. The student organization was recently honored alongside UofL's Lambda Law Caucus as an "Unsung Hero" by the Kentucky Alliance Against Racism and Political Repression for their involvement in the Fairness Campaign's McDonald's protest, an action in response to an act of anti-gay discrimination currently under investigation by the Human Relations Commission as a violation of Louisville's Fairness Ordinance.

UofL's outreach to the Fairness Campaign has extended beyond Louisville's city limits to the Capitol in Frankfort, with commonGround's hosting of the Fairness Campaign's Lobbying 101, a pre-lobby day training of over 30 students and community members in public policy advocacy. The training, lead by coalition partner Metropolitan Housing Coalition's Phoenix Lindsey-Hall and Fairness Leadership Council member Carla Wallace, served as the model for subsequent lobby trainings on "Kentuckians Value Fairness Day" in Frankfort. That day students from UofL rallied and lobbied Frankfort alongside students from the University of Kentucky, Eastern Kentucky University, Centre College, Murray State University, ally partners the Kentucky Fairness Alliance, Jobs With Justice, the National Association of Social Workers in Kentucky, the Big Sandy Foster and Adoptive Association, churches from across Louisville, and many, many more allies to make their collective voices heard in opposition to attack legislation SB 68 and in demand of a statewide Fairness law.

Reports from inside Senate offices suggest an overwhelming majority of incoming constituent communications opposed to SB 68, which lead, presumably, to the leadership's subsequent refusal to even call the bill to a vote on the Senate floor. When we work in coalition with our allies to achieve our vision, the impact is extraordinary. As we prepare to defeat the possibility of another SB 68—or any of the myriad of attack bills the 2010 long session could bring—we must build on our collective strength, fostering and nurturing our relationships with ally organizations and community partners, and ourselves reach out to involve the community more integrally in our work. For his close work with the Fairness Campaign, UofL's Brian Buford has been nominated for the school's Community Engagement Outreach Award, a permanent recognition honoring UofL faculty, students, and staff engaged in exemplary community engagement activities—an award that would dually honor the Fairness Campaign as the recipient's ally organization.

In the coming months, look for more coalition events and volunteer opportunities with UofL and other ally organizations. We will work with the Jewish Community Center to promote awareness of LGBT Holocaust issues, ally with Fairness organizations across the state to lobby legislators in their home districts, and continue to work closely with UofL, in April with my participation in Lambda Law Caucus' forum at the Brandeis School of Law on April 7, "From Prop 8 to SB 68: Legislative Attacks on LGBT Families." If you have a suggestion of a potential ally organization for the Fairness Campaign, or a specific area of interest or potential engagement in which you would like to work, please e-mail me at Chris@Fairness.org. I hope, as we move forward in the fight to achieve fairness for all Kentuckians and their families, that we may forge many more new and fruitful relationships in our own community, and around the state.



Fairness Director Chris Hartman and Brian Buford with UofL's Office of LGBT Services

The Silence Over Thunder Coalition and Fairness

The Silence Over Thunder coalition continues to challenge the militarization of Thunder Over Louisville that will be held this year on April 18 on the waterfront downtown. The coalition believes that military bombers at Thunder glamorize the reality of warfare and overshadow the traumatic impact of war on the lives of both veterans and civilians.

While the Fairness Campaign does not oppose Thunder Over Louisville, the Kentucky Derby Festival or the military per se, we have once again decided to endorse the Silence Over Thunder coalition for several reasons:

- ★ The U.S. military overtly and explicitly discriminates against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender military personnel with the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy. As a result, LGBT people in the military are more vulnerable to intimidation, repression and violence.
- ★ The U.S. military has had the exclusive right to set up military recruitment efforts on the Great Lawn during the event. Previously no other entity was permitted official access to the Great Lawn to counter the military’s message. In a positive development, this year the Peace Corps will be allowed access to provide another career alternative. We commend Kentucky Derby Festival and its sponsors for including Peace Corps recruiters as part of Thunder.
- ★ Moreover, our mission states that we will accomplish our goal of equal rights through public education, advocacy, political activity, community building and reciprocal alliances with others in the social justice community. Longtime allies – groups that have been there from the very beginning of our battle for LGBT rights in Louisville – have asked for our support.

We can’t allow one of our nation’s largest employers to discriminate against capable, qualified Americans and not say or do anything about it. Many LGBT individuals are serving in the United States military and they are being discriminated against everyday. LGBT military personnel have a right to choose to fight and die for their country without being punished for their sexual orientation or gender expression.

We request that Congress act now to end discrimination against LGBT military personnel. You can help to repeal “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” through the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network’s website – www.SLDN.org.

The Silence Over Thunder coalition includes: Louisville Friends Meeting (Quakers), American Veterans Against War, The Center for Faith and Action, Central Presbyterian Church, Clifton Unitarian Church, Drepung Gomang Institute, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Mission Outreach committee of First Unitarian Church, Social Justice Committee of Fourth Avenue United Methodist Church, Interfaith Paths to Peace, Jeff Street Baptist Community at Liberty, Kentucky Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, Kentucky Interfaith Task Force on Latin America and the Caribbean, The Board of Kentucky Refugee Ministries, Louisville Peace Action Community, Louisville Peace Chavurah, Pax Christi, The Peace and Compassion Buddha Circle, Peace and Social Justice committee of St. Williams Catholic Church, Students United for Peace and Justice, Sustainable Agriculture of Louisville, US Department of Peace/Louisville.

Fairness Applauds Anti-Racist Action

Last month, FuZion Night Club’s new management reached out to the Fairness Campaign with an offer to contribute their cover charge to the campaign at an event titled “House of Fairness.” Many Fairness supporters will remember the Fairness Campaign’s opposition to FuZion Night Club previously for their choice to host Shirley Q. Liquor, a blackface drag performer using racial and sexist stereotypes, which harm our entire community.

Before accepting involvement in the fundraising event, the Fairness Campaign leadership received assurance from the night club that Shirley Q. would never again be invited to perform at the venue and that the club’s new management is in full accord with the Fairness Campaign’s position on this issue.

Due to unfortunate extenuating circumstances, FuZion was shut down for the weekend on the night of “House of Fairness,” canceling the event. A future “House of Fairness” may be planned, but event or none, the Fairness Campaign applauds FuZion’s willingness to openly address this very serious issue of racism within our community, and apologize for the club’s previous involvement with this controversial racist performer.

You can read more about the Shirley Q. incidents online at www.Fairness.org in Fairness News/ Monthly Newsletters Dec. 2006 and June 2007.

Dinner Benefits ACLU and Fairness

Continuing the legacy begun in 2001, Susan Hershberg and the Wilshire Pantry once again exhibited their exceptional culinary talents and immense generosity as they hosted this year’s Fairness/ACLU Dinner on March 21. Guests enjoyed a fabulous evening at the Muhammad Ali Center while benefiting the work of long-time allies – the Fairness



Campaign and the ACLU of Kentucky. A record crowd of nearly 300 attendees relished the four-course meal, beautiful floral displays by Magnolia’s and a spectacular view of the early spring sunset over the Ohio river.

Deep appreciation goes to this year’s event sponsors who understand the special importance of supporting this work during turbulent economic times. This year’s generous sponsors include Dr. Steve Adams & Michael Miller, Brooke & Matthew Barzun, Emily Bingham & Stephen Reily, Christy & Owsley Brown II, Janet Dakan, Jim Dickinson & Tim Combs, Amy Cabbage & Graham Troop, Sam Dorr & Charles Raith, Mary Moss Greenebaum, Bert Greenwell, Sandy Gulick, Travis Lay & Ren Scheuerman, Jessica Loving & Sheryl Snyder, Tom Wallace Lyons, Dr. Ernest Marshall, Hon. Mary Lou Marzian, Eleanor Bingham Miller, Lisa Osanka, Eugenia & Hon. John Potter, Jeff Rodgers & Ed Kruger, Steve and Kate Rudd Sarfin, Sandy Speer, Pat Stallard, George Stinson, Cliff Todd, Carla F. Wallace, Naomi F. Wallace, Drs. Terry & Morris Weiss, Dona Wells, John & Marilyn Werst, Nick Wilkerson, and Hon. John Yarmuth.



Hats off to this year’s planning committee, which included Michael Aldridge, Yana Baker, Sam Dorr, Eric Graninger, Chris Hartman, Susan Hershberg, Ed Kruger, Kendall Nash, Maria Price, Carla Wallace, Dona Wells and Becki Winchel. Their efforts resulted in the most successful fundraiser to date.



Thanks too to all the attendees and contributors. If you missed it this year, we hope you’ll plan to attend next spring.



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Help Plant the Seeds of Change Renew Your Fairness Membership Now!



Membership Matters

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I prefer my gift remain anonymous.

Planting the Seeds of Change Help by Renewing Your Fairness Membership Now

It is time to celebrate change! The unprecedented legislative victories gained by the LGBT community this session speak volumes to the remarkable support we received from our members, whose efforts helped bring change to Frankfort!

From the resounding defeat of anti-adoption Senate Bill 68, to the House passage of the hospital visitation rights bill, we are making a measurable difference in the fight for our rights. As we move forward to the 2010 legislative session, however, we must be prepared to battle with even greater force the threat of future discriminatory attack bills, which our opponents often use as election-year fodder for their political campaigns. There is a great deal of work yet to do, including much progress to be made towards passage of the necessary statewide Fairness law, to protect our brothers and sisters across the commonwealth from discrimination.

This spring and summer, the Fairness Campaign will be planting seeds of change across Kentucky, meeting with legislators and constituents in their home districts to lobby for statewide Fairness and against anti-adoption legislation. We challenge you to plant with us: when you renew your Fairness Campaign membership, encourage five of your friends and family to add their voices to yours by becoming a member. If every Fairness supporter brought five new members into the Campaign, with all of them contributing in some way, imagine the impact we would make above and beyond the victories from this year. The volume of phone calls, e-mails, and letters lobbying legislators would increase exponentially, and we would begin to build the wide network of support needed to achieve a Kentucky in which our LGBT community and our families are protected and equal under the law.

So sow some seeds of change with us! Copy this membership form and distribute it to five friends and family members, or encourage them to join online at www.Fairness.org.

PFLAG Louisville's Bruce and Margaret Lincoln Scholarship Awards Banquet
Sunday, April 19, 5 pm, First Lutheran Church, 417 East Broadway
Minimum \$10 suggested donation PFLAGLouis@aol.com