



No More No Less

NEWS FROM THE FAIRNESS CAMPAIGN December 2005

Fairness Law Targeted by Right Wing

It was one year ago, December 9, 2004, that we celebrated an incredible Fairness victory when a bi-partisan coalition of the Metro Council voted overwhelmingly (19 to 6) to re-enact the Fairness ordinance, securing civil rights protections for all. Over a decade of work by justice seeking people from all across this community had transformed our hometown.

But before the ink was even dry on the mayor's signature on the law, operatives of the radical right wing were already scheming ways to undo our civil rights protections. And now they're targeting the 2006 session of the Kentucky Legislature as the next battleground for their attacks. Regrettably, the right wing's strategists continue to position anti-gay measures as a mechanism to mobilize their extremist base of supporters. We must counter those efforts with mobilization activities of our own that demonstrate to elected officials the true majority of fair-minded Kentuckians believe in equality and justice for all.

Reports indicate that the radical right wing is organizing on at least three key fronts. They include: 1) Changing Kentucky law to prevent local governments from passing civil rights or Fairness laws that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The anti-gay operatives are disguising this measure as an effort to make the civil rights laws "uniform" across the state, suggesting that it would make things "simpler" for everyone to understand. Of course, in actuality it would strip the legal protections against discrimination from LGBT people already in place in Louisville, Lexington and Covington.

2) Another stealth anti-gay measure is to alter the process and make it easier to place issues on the ballot for public vote or referendum. Civil rights should never be subject to popular vote. The majority should never have the right to deny any group's basic human rights.

3) In what appears to be the second verse of the right wing's hymn demonizing LGBT people and their families, they're working on legislation that would deny lesbian and gay couples from adopting children, as well as serving as foster parents. We can not allow these attacks on our families to go unchallenged.

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Honoring 15 Years of Work for Fairness

by Aletha Fields

Happy birthday to us, Happy birthday to us, Happy birthday, dear Fairness, Happy birthday to us! Can you believe it? June 2006 marks the 15th anniversary of the Fairness Campaign. One of the landmarks of grassroots organizing all over this country, your Fairness Campaign, distinguishes itself with historical civil rights victories, each won with the tenacious support of our amazing, committed, and unyielding volunteers.

As the 15th year approaches, I want to share my own story of coming out in Fairness. Thirteen years ago, I was bedridden with the birth of a new child. The news came on and from my home in another county, I watched the Board of Aldermen refuse to allow the Fairness ordinance its passage. As anger filled my heart, my only wish was to have been right there in that room fighting alongside that dark-haired white lady whose passion was never hidden and that one fierce-eyed white guy. I could not imagine their pain and disappointment at one more instance where justice was delayed and then, by default, denied. I never forgot that day.

In 1999, as my first year of teaching was in its second semester and so was my coming out, how scared I was to call 502.893.0788! A nice lady named Lisa had given me the phone number when I met her at the "Love Makes A Family" rally in Central Park, right across the street from my house. I called the number and another nice lady that answered the phone and told me where to be for my first volunteer shift at Pride.

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PLAN TO ATTEND

★ **The Fire This Time Release Party** – Dec. 3, 6-7:30 p.m., The Alternative, 1032 Story Ave., celebrate spoken word artist Aletha Fields' first CD/DVD recording. Free admission.

★ **Fair Trade Convergence** – Dec. 6, 6:30-9 p.m., Kentucky Theatre.

★ **Grinch Awards** – Dec. 8, 6:30-8 p.m., Clifton Center, 2117 Payne St., KY Jobs with Justice holiday party.

★ **I Still Believe** – Voices of Kentuckiana holiday concerts, Dec. 9 & 10, 8 p.m., Clifton Center, 2117 Payne St., tickets \$15, 583-1013 for more info.

★ **Creating Change Talk Back** – Dec. 12, 7-9 p.m., Fairness office, panel discussion about lessons from Creating Change conference and implementing strategies for change here at home.

★ **Volunteer Appreciation Party** – Jan. 8, 2-4 p.m., at the Fairness office.

★ **Fairness Town Hall Meeting** – Jan. 12, 6:30 p.m., Fairness office, discuss the 2006 legislative session, where we're at and where we're going with the work to defend our civil rights.

★ **Unity Dinner** – Jan. 21, 6:30 p.m., KY Alliance Against Racist & Political Repression's annual dinner featuring Dr. Cornel West, tickets \$40.

★ **Louisville Youth Group** – support and social group for LGBTQ youth 14 – 21, weekly meetings. Call 454-3300.

★ **Sienna** – Transgender support and social monthly meeting, 3rd Saturday, 7 p.m. Call 346-5298 for information.

★ **PFLAG** – Louisville - Monthly meeting, 3rd Sunday, 3 p.m., 1st Lutheran Church, 417 E. Broadway. Call 329-0229 for information.

**Kentucky Alliance
Against Racist
& Political Repression
Unity Dinner**

**Saturday, Jan. 21
Dinner at 6:30 p.m.**

*The Gardens,
525 W. Muhammad Ali
Tickets: \$40*

Featured speaker

Dr. Cornel West

Professor of African American studies and religion at Princeton University and author of *Race Matters* and *Democracy Matters*

To reserve a seat at a Fairness Campaign table, call 893-0788.

Who is leaving crumbs too small even for a mouse?

Have the members of your union had to fight back efforts to take away benefits? Have you experienced layoffs? Does your employer refuse to give domestic partnership benefits?

If so, join KY Jobs with Justice for the meanest, greediest holiday party around and elect your "Grinch of the Year" by buying votes! "Grinch of the Year" is a Jobs with Justice dis-honor, given to the individual or corporation that has done the most harm to working families in our community. The Grinch Award will then be presented to the most heinous violators of workers' rights.

Spend an evening with the "Mean One" and Jobs with Justice on Thursday, Dec. 8 from 6:30-8 p.m. at the Clifton Center, 2117 Payne St. Each vote costs just \$1 and the tickets are sold in 5 vote blocks.

We know you believe in fair election practices, but when it comes to picking Grinches, it seems the dirtier and more corrupt, the more fun we have! Contact Jobs with Justice for more info at 625-3724 or Fairness at 893-0788 to nominate your own "Grinch of the Year."

**Find out more @
www.fairness.org**

Honoring 15 Years

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Pride, colorful and full of the rich textures of the LGTBQ community, filled my day with the handshakes and hugs. As the weeks flew by, and my capacity to volunteer effectively met with approval, an invitation to be on the Coordinating Committee came. In that room were the likes of Chester, Dan Farrell, Carla Wallace, Kathleen Campisano, Diane Moten, Carol Kraemer, Lisa Gunterman, Jeff Rodgers, Fae Goodman, Pamela McMichael, Maria Price, Maureen Keenan, and Eric Graninger. Talk about intense! The table from which I ate my first activist meals was peopled with folks whose commitment and passion spoke, breathed, and moved with each meeting. I was in love! How could I find myself in a room with this much fire? I had never met this kind of white people in my life! Where I come from, white folks hid behind discriminatory acts and racial discrimination. Who made this bunch?! WOW! The inspiration for passionate, righteous work and community-based accountability weaved its way into my life as an activist just as sweet vines wrap themselves around warm tree trunks whose roots have known thousands of years and thousands of generations.

The Fairness Campaign knows generations and it is not without the careful and intentional work of our founders, our foresisters and forebrothers, who poured so much of their lives, their passion, and their time to make our city livable for its citizens—all of us. I am grateful, friends, to have eaten my first meals from that powerful table. Never in my life have I seen such a beautiful, strong group of righteous people who walk the talk and whenever a fall may have occurred, they had the courage and the challenge to get back up again.

I salute my foresisters and brothers in the struggle. I thank you for your dedication and commitment, your vision and your passion. Without you, where would we be? I am grateful that question will never be asked. And I have learned, that you are the answer! Happy Birthday and THANK YOU!

Creating Personal Stories of Change

The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Creating Change Conference took place in November in Oakland and 11 people from the Fairness Campaign attended. The four-day conference was packed with workshops and opportunities to meet other activists from across the country, learn new skills and dialogue about what is working and what isn't in our work for social justice. Here are a just a few of the personal stories about change from the conference.

Charlotte Albrecht – "Speakers challenged us to re-examine the bigger picture of the work we do. Equally important was the time that this week provided for our group from Kentucky to strengthen or build relationships with each other and to talk truthfully about the challenges we face back at home."

Andrew Greer – "Creating Change was an experience of knowledge expansion. Previously, the notion of what it was to be a member of the LGBT community was much more narrowly defined in my eyes...listening, I feel that my compassion has grown exponentially."

Jaison Gardner – "I return to Louisville with a renewed spirit and a fervent passion... since I was last active, many changes have come, though, some have not changed. People of Color in the LGBT community are still an overlooked and under-appreciated population. Our local pride festivals still do not include cultural relevance for our black, Latino and Asian American brothers and sisters. The treatment of transgender people as 2nd class citizens is still alive and well. When only 60 people attend a Transgender Day of Remembrance — five times that number attend the nightclub on the snowiest of evenings — it is clear that our community still has a lot of changin' to do. I offer this city my commitment to be an agent for change in addressing the issues we face, and I challenge you to do the same. After all, a change is gonna come, won't you come along, too?"

Join the Fairness Action Alert Network

When there's important breaking news of concern to the LGBT community and our allies, Fairness wants to be sure that you're in the loop and are able to take immediate action to ensure that voices for justice and equality are heard. In the fast paced world of today, email is often the best way for Fairness to reach you with the most up-to-date and complete information. If you're not currently receiving email updates from the Campaign, we invite you to join the Fairness Action Alert Network. To join, simply send an email to fairness@fairness.org with the subject line "Add to Email List" and include your full name, postal address, phone and email address in the body of the email so we can add you to or update your listing in our database. That way we'll make sure you'll receive updates and action alerts.

Discrimination Lawsuit Filed

In late October, amidst a sea of waving rainbow colored flags, Rev. Todd Eklof, a minister at Clifton Unitarian Church in Louisville, stepped to the rally podium across from the Hall of Justice to call attention to injustice and the need to take action.

Rev. Eklof knows well the cost of stepping up and speaking out, and still he reminds us so eloquently that we must. Last year, following the passage of the constitutional amendment banning marriage between same-gender couples, Rev. Eklof had informed his congregation that he would no longer perform any marriages until lesbian & gay couples could legally marry too.

Two months after a televised interview drew attention to his stance, Rev. Eklof was fired from his position as a video producer at Kentucky Farm Bureau. At the rally, Rev. Eklof announced that he was filing a lawsuit against Kentucky Farm Bureau for religious discrimination. He said, "I hope to put the powers-that-



Rev. Todd Eklof speaks out for justice.

be on notice, that we will not remain silent, we will not resign ourselves to the betrayal of our fellow citizens by remaining mute in the wake of unjust and unconstitutional laws! You may take away our jobs, but we shall not go away quietly! You may seek to publicly defame us, ridicule our beliefs and deny us the same rights as you yourselves enjoy, but we will cry out loud...Justice for All!"



Supporters march to the Hall of Justice with Rev. Todd Eklof. (Photos by Anita Hester)

Working Groups to Address Transgender Issues

On May 22, 2005, 19 year old Timothy Blair, Jr., was shot multiple times at the corner of 28th and Magazine in Louisville's West End. At the time of his death, Timothy was wearing women's clothing. Despite her insistence, his mother Rosalind was not allowed to see her child's body until the next day, and even then she was not afforded the chance to see for herself the extent of his injuries. Now, 6 months later, she has still not been able to obtain a copy of the official police report of the murder, nor has she been given information by the Louisville Metro Police Department about any progress that's been made toward solving the case.

On Nov. 17, representatives from local social justice organizations heard Rosalind Blair tell the story of her child's murder. They had gathered at the Fairness Campaign office to discuss the Amnesty International report, *Stonewalled: Police Abuse and Misconduct Against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender People in the U.S.* The meeting was called to examine anti-transgender discrimination in light of National Transgender Day of Remembrance. Represented at the meeting were the Justice Resource Center, Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, SIENNA Transgender Support, Kentucky Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression, Citizens Against Police Abuse, Feminist League of Organized Resistance, Louisville Youth Group, The Newby Network and Fairness Campaign.

After a briefing about the *Stonewalled* report, the group discussed some of the realities of being transgender in the Louisville area. The vulnerability of people who are transgender and poor, people of color and/or youth was highlighted. Rosalind Blair shared her grief and frustration about her son's death and the way it was handled by the LMPD. Several local transpeople shared their experience. Other activists shared their thoughts and much heartfelt desire to know more about trans issues and to challenge their own transphobia. The group agreed to a strategy that combines education with advocacy and formed three working groups to tackle the intertwined issues. One group will develop a community education plan about transgender identity and experience. Another will push for a thorough investigation of Timothy Blair's murder, leading to arrest and prosecution. The third will work to develop a comprehensive strategy for addressing anti-TBLG discrimination and harassment within the Louisville Metro Police Department.

To participate in one or more of the working groups, or to get more information, please contact the Fairness Campaign at (502) 893-0788.

Fairness Law Targeted

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We won't stand a chance of defending our civil rights against attacks at the state legislature, unless all LGBT people, our friends, families and allies reach out now and talk with more and more Kentuckians about protecting our Fairness laws and our rights to have a family.

YOU can make a difference. Speak out, be visible, take action. Go to our website - www.fairness.org - to learn more about how your actions can help defend our civil rights and real family values.

100 Ways to Help Defend Your Rights

1. Stop by the Fairness office, 2263 Frankfort Avenue, to fill out and sign a postcard to your state legislator.
2. Download a postcard from our web site: www.fairness.org. Complete the card and mail to the Fairness office.
3. Go to www.loukymetro.org/map.asp, type in your address to learn the name of your Kentucky representative and senator.
4. Send an email to 10 of your friends asking them to also sign a postcard.
5. Come to the office for any time you have - 15 minutes to 3 hours - and help locate the appropriate representative for the signed post cards we have already collected.
6. Prepare the postcards for delivery to our Jefferson County state legislators.
7. Join a delivery team of five people and meet with your representative to ask her/him to support their constituents' calls for Fairness and equality.
8. Come to the office and help call and recruit potential volunteers we have from all the outreach efforts across the community.
9. Work from home on your computer to identify the representatives for already signed post cards.
10. Make a donation to the Fairness Campaign to help us pay for photocopying, mailings, flip charts, staff time and more.
11. Go to the Fairness Campaign web site to read 90 more simple ways that you can help protect our basic rights.

Fairness Wish List

HP Laserjet-10A printer cartridge, copy paper, postage stamps, trash bags, flip chart pads, paper towels, toilet paper, liquid soap, floodlight bulbs - 90 watt, small reflector bulbs - 50 watt, and gift certificates to grocery stores or office supply stores



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Thank You!

Your gifts help support the vision of the Fairness Campaign which seeks to dismantle oppression and build an inclusive community where all individuals are valued and empowered to reach their full potential. We are a broad, diverse community of LGBT people and allies committed to transforming society and building a more just world.

CFAIR Wants You!

The Committee for Fairness and Individual Rights (CFAIR), the political action committee of the Fairness Campaign, is looking for board members and candidate interviewers and we want to talk with you. Each election cycle CFAIR surveys and interviews political candidates on issues of importance to the LGBT and ally communities and endorses candidates that will support equality and justice for all.

If you are interested in nominating yourself or someone else to serve with CFAIR, please email derbylawyer@iglou.com or call the office at 893-0788 for a nomination form.

Join in Building Community

Fairness' Community Building and Education committee has been hard at work, recently coordinating a Wake Up Wal-Mart film screening, participating in Dining Out for Life and Worlds AIDS Day memorial service. In addition, the committee is working in coalition with Women in Transition and others on a Dismantling Classism conference scheduled for Feb. 11 at Wesley House and are in the early stages of planning for a Dismantling Racism workshop at Fairness. You're welcome and invited to join in the fun of the Community Building committee that meets on the 1st & 3rd Thursdays of each month at 6 p.m. at the Fairness office. Call 893-0788 for more information.

Congratulations

Fairness Campaign and SONG (Southerners on New Ground) co-founder Pam McMichael has been appointed the new director of the Highlander Center in Tennessee. The Highlander provides education and support to poor and working people fighting economic injustice, prejudice, and environmental destruction. Join us in congratulating Pam on her new position!



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Defending Fairness in Frankfort Town Hall Meeting - Jan. 12



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I prefer my gift remain anonymous.

Make a Gift to Keep Fairness Safe

For nearly 15 years, the Fairness Campaign has been working with friends and allies from our community and around the state and nation to help secure equality and justice for all in Louisville and Kentucky. Six years ago, you and Friends of Fairness helped win one of the most progressive laws in the country protecting Louisvillians from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in housing, employment and public accommodations. One year ago, Louisville’s Metro Council reaffirmed the Fairness ordinance. Yet today, we are still fighting to keep those protections safe.

Anti-Fairness opponents in the Kentucky legislature are maneuvering to strip us of our legal protections and deny our rights. We must remain vigilant, and we need your help.

And the great thing is there are so many ways you can help defend your rights. Your time, talents, energy and resources are all invaluable in the work ahead to keep our Fairness law safe. Call or stop by the Fairness office to see how you can play a vital role in the work for equality and justice.

In addition, your gift of \$25, \$100 or \$500 to the Fairness Campaign today will help us to ensure that we keep Fairness for all in our community for many years to come. We can continue to win in this struggle for our human rights, but not without you.

Thank you for helping to keep Fairness for All!

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