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Amendment 2 protests stepped up

Associated Press

Protests against an amendment that bars laws that protect gays and lesbians from discrimination have gathered speed across Colorado as groups plan rallies and examine ways to challenge the new state law.

The Boulder City Council voted 9-0 Tuesday night to join with litigation to challenge the constitutionality of Amendment 2, said Kevin McNeill, city public information officer. The unified lawsuit now includes Boulder, Aspen, Denver and nine individuals including tennis star Martina Navratilova, he said.

A citizens group called the Colorado Legal Initiatives Project is drafting the lawsuit.

Aspen's City Council passed a resolution Monday denouncing Amendment 2 and reaffirmed its commitment to human rights, City Attorney Jed Caswell said.

Amendment 2, which was approved by voters Nov. 3, bars any government entity from passing laws prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation. It also repealed such laws on the books in Denver, Boulder and Aspen.

In Fort Collins, gay rights supporters at Colorado State University pledged to protest Amendment 2 every week until the measure is repealed.

On Monday, a crowd at CSU listened to speeches and heard statements from Sen.-elect Ben Nighthorse Campbell and CSU president Albert Yates. Yates promised to enforce the anti-bias clause in CSU's bylaws even though the amendment makes such clauses illegal.

In his statement, Campbell said, "We will use every avenue - the courts, legislatures, city councils, state and federal government - to undo this wrong. . . . Discrimination is wrong. Discrimination is wicked."

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