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COLLEGE PA EMPLOYEE DISCRIMINATION HOMOSEXUAL
PENN ST. FACULTY APPROVES ANTI-DISCRIMINATION POLICY
Author: *Kelly P. Kissel, Associated Press*

Faculty Senate members at Pennsylvania State University said college president Joab Thomas did not go far enough with a proposed anti- discrimination policy, so they approved a policy without him.

The senate gave its approval Tuesday to a plan that includes specific protections for homosexuals and bisexuals, rejecting a proposal by Thomas that included only generic references to "personal characteristics."

"Our aim wasn't to embarrass the president. We just don't think he went far enough," said Donald Rung, the chairman of a policy committee that recommended the tougher stance. Thomas is in Europe and unavailable for comment.

The senate ratified the recommended changes in the university's anti- discrimination policy on a 93-12 vote. The issue now goes before the school's Board of Trustees.

Protecting homosexuals from discrimination was brought up by a campus study group in December 1987, but the issue was not taken to the trustees. Thomas scheduled a board discussion last November, but the item was withdrawn so the Faculty Senate could discuss it first.

The result was Tuesday's resolution.

"The University's Faculty Senate recommends that the University's non- discrimination policy be amended to include the specific phrase 'sexual orientation,' " the resolution said.

Thomas had wanted only a generic policy "without reference to personal characteristics that are not related to academic ability or job performance."

Part of the discussion concerned a report in The Inquirer on March 10 that Penn State women's basketball coach Rene Portland would not allow lesbians on the team.

"It's not clear what impact this would have on her," Rung said after the meeting. "Clearly, all people need to be judged on their merits and not on some irrelevant issue."

Those voting against the proposed changes said Thomas' plan was sufficient.

"Thomas' statement is all-inclusive, it's the statement we can all stand behind," said Barton W. Browning, representing the college of liberal arts.

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