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Meet our representatives on Wednesday, September 20, 7:00 PM at the Business Career Fair Reception at the Hilton and Thursday, September 21st at the Texas A&M Business Career Fair in the Wehner Building. We will return to campus on November 1st to hold on-campus interviews. We look forward to seeing you!

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Army recommends honorable discharge for gay politician

LOS ALAMITOS, Calif. (AP) — Army officials on Sunday recommended an honorable discharge for Reserve Lt. Steve May, an openly gay Arizona lawmaker who the Army said violated its "don't ask, don't tell" policy by acknowledging his sexuality during a legislative debate.

Officials would not disclose why a panel of three Army colonels recommended an honorable discharge after the Army had pursued a less-than-honorable, general discharge. Honorable discharges are typical for soldiers forced to leave the military because of sexual orientation.

"We presented the position that we thought was justified in this case," said Maj. Mark Johnson, who argued the military's case.

May's attorney Christopher Wolf said the investigation was a personal attack on the legislator's integrity. May's record is unblemished and he has been rated an exceptional officer.

"We believe the board ignored the facts and ignored the law," Wolf said.

May said he still considers himself a member of the reserves.

"I'm still in," he said Sunday. "I'll continue to serve until the appeals process is exhausted."

The discharge recommendation will be reviewed by an appointing authority, typically an Army general, and then be sent to Army personnel authorities, officials said. Until that review is completed, likely within three

months, May will continue to serve two days a month in the reserves.

The Army could have allowed May to remain in the reserves under a Defense Department provision by declaring doing so would be for the good of the military, Wolf said. The three colonels hearing the case at the Army base in this Orange County suburb south of Los Angeles rejected that argument Sunday.

"The Army is kicking out a highly qualified and valued officer today. The loss is to the Army and the American people."

— Stacey Sobel
 legal director of the Service Members Legal Defense Network

The board's decision shows "the policy does not work," said Stacey Sobel, legal director of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network, a non-profit organization that helps military members facing discharge because of their sexual orientation.

"The Army is kicking out a highly qualified and valued officer today. The loss is to the Army and the American people," Sobel said. "This sends the wrong message to the public about how the Army values the contribution of its people."

The Army began investigating May after he acknowledged his homosexuality in the Statehouse during a February 1999 hearing on a bill that

would have prohibited government benefits for employees' gay partners. May had been open about his sexuality since his first campaign for elected office in 1996.

May made the public remarks after he was honorably discharged in 1995 and before he was recalled to active duty in the Army Reserve during the Kosovo crisis.

Some states neglect checking fraud list

WASHINGTON (AP) — More than half the states hire contractors without regular reviews to determine whether the companies are barred from doing business with the federal government for fraud or other violations, an Associated Press review found.

The federal government maintains an Internet-accessible list of companies it will not hire. Fourteen states said their contracting offices do not check the list, 20 other states check only occasionally, and about half a dozen instituted checks as a result of the AP inquiry.

A review of state procurement records in all 50 states found several states that fail to consult the federal list have repeatedly hired contractors that have had run-ins with the government.

In Vermont, two dozen contractors forbidden from working for the fed-

eral government have done business with the state, including Earth Waste Systems of Pittsford, Vt., banned from federal contracts in 1998.

The company, which recycles metals and dismantles buildings, emerged from bankruptcy in 1999 and has a contract from the Vermont National Guard for demolition work.

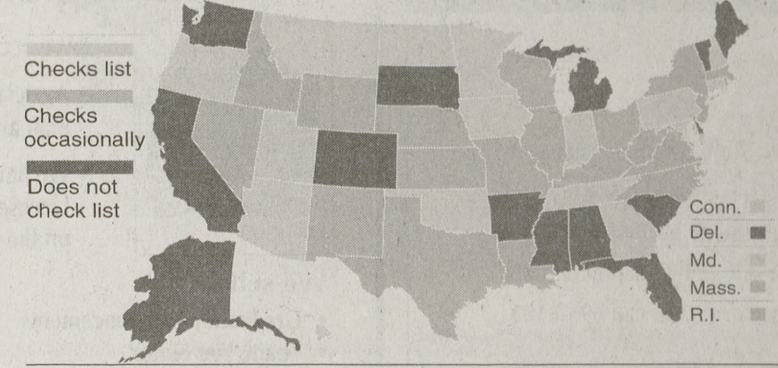
Vermont maintains no central list of its own and believes that problems with barred contractors are not widespread enough to merit one, said Tom Pelham, Vermont's finance commissioner until he left in July.

"Vermont's a small state," Pelham said. "We do have a good competitive bidding process."

Steve Medlin, an accountant for Earth Waste, said he was unaware that his company had been on the federal list.

Failing to check the list

More than 30 states do not routinely check a federal list of contractors banned from doing business with the federal government before awarding contracts. As a result, many state agencies to business with companies that have a record of fraud, mismanagement or abuse. Here's a look at the states.



Source: Associated Press analysis

News in Brief

Tropical storm loses strength

CEDAR KEY, Fla. (AP) — Tropical Storm Gordon lost some strength as it charged toward Florida's Gulf Coast on Sunday with winds just below hurricane strength, drenching rain and a storm surge threatening to reach 10 feet.

Gordon's top sustained winds fell from 75 mph early Sunday to about 70 mph by afternoon, just below the 74 mph threshold for a hurricane.

A voluntary evacuation was underway on the small island of Cedar Key, directly in the storm's path about 100 miles north of Tampa, but many of this rustling town's 800 residents were staying put.

Clinton proposes increased funds for nursing homes

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Clinton proposed spending \$1 billion to remedy what he said is inadequate staffing at nursing homes, the "number one culprit" leading to neglect for too many older Americans.

"Older Americans, who have worked hard all their lives, deserve respect, not neglect," Clinton said Saturday in his weekly radio address. He was broadcast live from the Washington Home, a venerable nursing home not far from the White House.

The Republican-controlled Congress, which expects to consider health care this fall, "will try to find fair middle ground" on a variety of issues, said John Czwartak, spokesman for Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, R-Miss.

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