



www.councilmanrosendahl.com

City Hall (213) 473-7011 West LA (310) 575-8461 Westchester (310) 568-8772

May 13, 2009

Contact: Nate Kaplan-(213) 473-7011

CITY COUNCIL CALLS FOR END OF ANTI-GAY PURGE IN IRAQ

*Rosendahl Motion Calls on US, Iraq Governments to Stop
Brutal Torture & Murder of Gay Iraqis*

LOS ANGELES – The City Council today unanimously called on the governments of Iraq and the United States to take strong and immediate action to halt the persecution, torture and murder of gay Iraqis.

Drawing attention to an issue largely ignored by the mainstream media, the council condemned reports coming out of Iraq that death squads are rounding up Iraqi gay men, sealing their anuses with powerful glue, then inducing diarrhea, which leads to a painful and agonizing death. Reports indicate that videos of the form of torture are being distributed via mobile phones in Iraq.

“This is an outrage,” said Councilman Bill Rosendahl, sponsor of the resolution. “The annihilation of our people, ordered by religious decree in a nation where our troops have sacrificed their lives to restore religious freedom, is appalling.”

Rosendahl, the city’s only LGBT elected official, said it was not enough for local activists to work for marriage equality. “Our people are being tortured. They are being killed. We cannot remain silent. We must stand up, speak out, and demand the government to take action to stop this holocaust.”

Rosendahl’s resolution puts the City of Los Angeles officially on record, calling on President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to demand the Iraqi government take action. It also calls on the media to start paying attention to the story.

“We keep hearing nonstop about Carrie Prejean,” Rosendahl said. “Why is no one covering this story? People are dying.”

The council heard testimony from Hossein Alizadeh, a representative of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, who read a very moving

letter from a gay Iraqi. Alizadeh told the council that an Iraqi LGBT group documented 617 cases of assassination of LGBT people between 2005 and 2008. Since last year, when a “sexual cleansing” campaign was launched, the pace has intensified, with 70 such killings in the past five months.

Los Angeles-area LGBT activists spoke in favor of the resolution, and so did a representative of a local SEIU union. Ten of the council’s 15 members rose to speak on the measure.

###