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## **FIRST HOMOPHOBIC ATTACK IN US CONGRESS RACE - Fitz-Gerald campaign worker says Polis should stay in closet-**

**BOULDER** – Boulder Pride and other LGBT organizations are asking US Congressional candidate Joan Fitz-Gerald to rebuke homophobic remarks and ask Jim Hudson, a campaign volunteer and Vice-President of the veterans activist group Colorado Veterans for America, to publicly apologize for the recent homophobic attack of fellow candidate Jared Polis.

The group, Colorado Veteran's for America, attacked US congressional candidate, Jared Polis in a telephone call to the Denver Post on Saturday January 26<sup>th</sup> because Jared Polis is gay. Jim Hudson, the Vice President of the Colorado Veterans for America and Fitz-Gerald campaign worker working at the campaign office, suggested that Jared Polis, a US congressional candidate, should just stay in the closet. The CVA has endorsed Fitz-Gerald in the upcoming congressional race.

Polis was quoted as saying, "I expected homophobic attacks. When someone runs for office, one opens oneself up to all sorts of criticisms. I thought this kind of attack might surface in the general election, not the democratic primary."

Hudson said, "He says, that he (Polis) has to "tell" that he's gay. I can tell you, when I served in Vietnam, I served with many gays, and was honored to do so. And they didn't feel compelled to make an issue of their orientation, because, I presume, that they thought it was more important that they serve their country."

Casey Gallagher, current President of Boulder Pride stated, "LGBT Americans should not have to choose between serving their country and being true to their self-identities. No other minority group is effectively asked to deny who they are in order to join the military, but 'Don't Ask Don't Tell' forces that painful and artificial choice on our community. Mr. Hudson should understand how bigoted this broken policy is. Unfortunately, his comments only reinforce the divisive and cynical underpinnings of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell.' On behalf of Boulder Pride, I ask Senator Fitz-Gerald to repudiate the comments unequivocally."

"This kind of closed-minded opinion implies that gays and lesbians should not live their lives as who they really are," said Sonya Lewis, Immediate Past President of Boulder pride and current LGBTQ representative to the City of Boulder Inclusiveness committee.

At a Boulder debate on Sunday January 27<sup>th</sup>, Fitz-Gerald was asked by Lewis if she would apologize for the actions of her campaign staff and dismiss the worker. Fitz-Gerald refused and stated that she has a gay-friendly record.

Eugene Pearson, former Boulder City Council candidate and Boulder Pride Vice-President said, "This kind of comment is gay baiting and indicates the Fitz-Gerald campaign may be using Polis's sexual orientation to gain some kind of advantage against him. Fitz-Gerald has availed herself of opportunities to support and advance issues of gays and lesbians, which makes Hudson's comments all the more remarkable & reproachable. A true ally of the LGBTQ community would rebuke the statement and take this as an opportunity for a learning moment."

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ABOUT BOULDER PRIDE: Boulder Pride's mission is to cultivate an empowered and inclusive lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer community in order to achieve equality, respect, and well-being for all LGBTQ people in Boulder County. Our programs and services include Pride House, the LGBTQ Community Center of Boulder County; Speaking Out; PrideFest and other events; and advocacy on issues of concern to the LGBT community.  
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