

Task Force ‘demands higher standard from national candidates’

October 3, 2008

Rea Carey, executive director of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund, responds to last night’s vice presidential debate between Republican Gov. Sarah Palin and Democratic Sen. Joseph Biden.

Statement by Rea Carey, Executive Director National Gay and Lesbian Task Force Action Fund

“I found myself reacting as if I had heard fingernails on a chalkboard when Gov. Sarah Palin talked about her tolerance. I’m sorry, but tolerance with a smile does not equal support for our lives nor does it honor the validity of our relationships and families. Much of the country has moved well beyond the condescension and dismissiveness of ‘tolerance.’ We have higher expectations than patronizing statements of tolerance by anyone seeking to lead this nation. We also have higher expectations for those political leaders, such as Sen. Joseph Biden, who have been our allies on so many issues to finally, and unequivocally, stand up for our full equality. “I look forward to a day when the leadership of our country can set an example and clearly state that it is time for the rejection of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender Americans to end. Too many elected officials have not even met the low bar of calling for complete legal equality for all Americans.

“We live in difficult times. Families sit at their kitchen tables dealing with the challenges of our day — keeping their jobs, putting fuel in their tanks and food on the table, and obtaining good and affordable health care. Our families — LGBT families — are dealing with the exact same concerns, only without the legal protections that are so critical to our welfare. What I wanted to hear in the debate, and did not, is a belief that protections and opportunities, like marriage, should exist so that our families have the ability to both thrive and to contribute to society on equal footing with our straight friends and neighbors.”