

## NO PAY FOR GAY



Peter TerVeer a former employee the Library of Congress has been fired for being gay. He has filed a discrimination complaint after a supervisor allegedly harassed and humiliated him before ultimately being fired. As an employee of the Library of Congress's Office of the Inspector General from 2008 until last week, he claims he was forced to take disability leave last fall and earlier this year after supervisor John R. Mech created a hostile work environment, even citing biblical passages condemning homosexuality. Peter TerVeer says he saved emails which prove his claim that he suffered religious discrimination and discrimination based on his sexual orientation. The former analyst says there were even verbal insults with his supervisor quoting Bible verses and specifically saying that he was going to hell and that he would never succeed as an employee. TerVeer says Mech's brimstone-and-hellfire act kicked into overdrive in June 2010. Powerful New York Senator Chuck Shumer has told the Washington Blade that he wants to "look into" the case. Cecily Patterson, another library employee says she find the case troubling. "It hurts me to my heart -- as a Christian person -- to hear this. This is the type of thing that, instead of bringing people to Christ, it's turning people away." TerVeer's attorney has said that this person's religion was directed at Peter's sexuality. "It's totally covered by federal law". In an affidavit to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, TerVeer wrote "I contend that I have been subjected to a hostile work environment by Mr. Mech since August 2009 on the basis of my sex (male), sexual orientation (homosexual), and religion (non-denominational Christian/Agnostic)". "I maintain that Mr. Mech has acted to impose his religious beliefs on me." Most of the library's employees have expressed their support for the young man. Annlinn Kruger, a conservator in the Library says, "I think, when there's injustice, people should come and support the person who's been discriminated against." The Library of Congress adopted a policy banning discrimination against employees based on sexual orientation in the 1990s, but a spokesperson for the institution wouldn't confirm that the measure is still in effect. Unfortunately, therefore it's unclear whether TerVeer's rights are protected. TerVeer is having a tough time finding another job. He was fired Friday after being on leave without pay since October and has \$12 to his name now. Peter TerVeer, and his attorney, Thomas Simeone, are awaiting the completion of an internal EEO investigation, which should be done, Simeone estimated, sometime in May.

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