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FLOOR DEBATE

April 16, 2002 LB 19

D-a-e-h-n. In early January, shortly after Miami crushed Nebraska in the Rose Bowl, Nebraska football Assistant Coach Ron Brown journeyed to a Los Angeles hotel to interview for the coaching job at Stanford. But he didn't get any further than the initial interview. The reason: it soon became apparent that his religious views, among other things, were incompatible with Stanford's liberal student body and active gay community. Quote, his religion was definitely something that had to be considered, end quote, said Alan Glenn, Stanford's assistant athletic director of human resources. Quote, we're a very diverse community with a diverse alumni. Anything that would stand out that much is something that has to be looked at. It was one of many variables that was considered. But Stanford's gay student leaders were more blunt in voicing their opposition. Quote, wow, it would be really hard for him here, said Courtney Wooten, a sophomore sociology and studio art major and social director of Stanford's Queer Straight Social and Political Alliance. He would be poorly received by the student body in general. For his part, Brown said, I don't know the answer to how I would fit in there. The truth is the truth. I don't believe you compromise any truth for whatever job. The early January meeting between Brown and Stanford Athletic Director Ted Leland at a Los Angeles hotel raises a number of questions. Among them: does Stanford's view of Brown's religious beliefs as one reason for not hiring him constitute discrimination against Christians? And do Brown's outspoken views on homosexuality constitute discrimination against Stanford's gay students? Is it ironic that a liberal university devoted to inclusion and diversity would refuse to hire a coach based in part on his Christian belief system? Have Brown's highly publicized religious views limited his career, effectively trapping him in Lincoln where he has found a comfortable niche for the past 15 years? Both academically and athletically, Stanford is one the nation's elite universities. Its faculty members have won 25 Nobel prizes since the university's founding, and its Athletic Department regularly contends for the Sears Director's Cup, symbolic of the most well-rounded sports program in the nation. Stanford is no stranger to Brown, 45, or his family. Brown's wife, Molina Carter, earned a bachelor's degree from the university in Palo Alto, California, and Brown's niece was recently admitted on early decision. Brown, who in 1979 earned