



USA: Clinton appears at GLBT event

November 8, 2006

Former US President Bill Clinton made a surprise appearance at a benefit on the weekend for the **National Gay and Lesbian Task Force**.

Clinton was in Miami, Florida to campaign for Democratic candidates. An aide called the NGLTF about an hour before to say that Clinton would like to attend.

The former president mingled with the 650 people who attended the dinner and stayed to see old friend NAACP Chair Julian Bond receive a leadership award. Bond has been a longtime supporter of LGBT issues.

NGLTF Executive Director Matt Foreman told the crowd, "I have the privilege of traveling all across this country and talking with LGBT people and virtually everywhere I go there is wrenching injustice: high rates of suicide, homelessness and violence and bullying among our young.

"Rampant discrimination in employment keeping closet doors slammed shut and the homophobia that is fueling the immoral rates of HIV infection among African-American gay and bisexual men. And the daily heartbreaking injustices our families face almost everywhere because they are denied legal recognition and protection.

"All of this makes me heartsick and angry at the root causes of these scourges. Angry that an entire industry has been built around demonising, defaming and dehumanising gay people. Angry that we now live in a nation where lying about a blow job is an impeachable offense, but lying that leads to the literal blowing up of thousands of human bodies is not. Angry that homophobia is once again polluting the political discourse in this election — at this very moment in time — in both subtle and crass ways."