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## Professional Notes (April 2022)

Arthur S. Leonard

# PROFESSIONAL *notes*

bag of anti-gay and anti-transgender measures that have been emphasized by the government in its appeal to socially conservative voters for their support.

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**KOSOVO** – The Parliament voted overwhelming against a measure proposed by the government to allow civil unions for same-sex partners. If the measure had passed, it would have made Kosovo the first, and so far only, Muslim country to provide a legal status for same-sex partners. *Euronews.com*, March 17.

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**MEXICO** – Marriage Equality legislation was published officially early in March, opening up the possibility for same-sex couples to marry in Yucatan State without the need to get a court order.

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**THAILAND** – On March 29 the cabinet rejected a proposed marriage equality bill, but it will still receive discussion in the parliament as a result of introduction by a minority party. The cabinet is pushing a civil union bill that would address some of the legal issues arising from the lack of a marital status for same-sex couples, but has been criticized for failing to provide a truly equal status for same-sex couples.

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**UNITED KINGDOM** – There were reports at the end of March that Prime Minister Boris Johnson had been backing away from an announced commitment to ban conversion therapy. Legislation to that effect has been tied up in Parliament, with arguments being made that a conversion therapy should only extend to sexual orientation, not to gender identity, based on the contention that there is research data showing that sexual orientation is not susceptible to change through conversion therapy, but that similar documentation is not yet available concerning gender identity.

LGBT rights groups in the U.K. reacted with outrage to the possibility that the government would retreat from its position, and it was unclear at the end of March exactly where the government stood.

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**ZIMBABWE** – *HIV Justice Network* reported on March 25 that Zimbabwe's parliament voted to repeal its HIV-specific criminal law, being only the second country in Africa to take such an action. Zimbabwe was also the first African country to pass an HIV-specific law. Advocates evidently convinced the parliament that the law was unduly vague and had been invoked to wrongly prosecute HIV-positive women who had likely been infected by their spouses or male partners.

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## PROFESSIONAL NOTES

*By Arthur S. Leonard*

**U.S. DISTRICT JUDGE ALISON NATHAN** was confirmed by the Senate on March 23 for a seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Circuit by a 49-47 vote. She was the second out lesbian to be appointed and confirm for a federal court of appeals seat, joining **BETH ROBINSON**, also nominated by **PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN**, who was previously a Vermont Supreme Court justice. Prior to her judicial service, Judge Nathan was special council to the Solicitor General of New York in 2010-11, and before that worked in the White House Counsel's Office during the early years of the Obama Administration. Now the 2<sup>nd</sup> Circuit has the distinction of being the first federal circuit court with an out LGBT judge, and of course the first to have two such judges!

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On March 25, **CALIFORNIA GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM** appointed **ANDI MUDRYK**, an out

transgender longtime disability rights advocate, to the Sacramento Superior Court. According to the *San Francisco Chronicle*, Judge Mudryk is the first transgender attorney in California to receive a governor's appointment to the judiciary, and Judge Mudryk is the second out transgender judge in the state. The first, **VICTORIA KOLAWKOWSKI**, was elected by voters in Alameda County to the Superior Court there.

