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By Patrick Range McDonald, LAWeekly

Now the Screen Actors Guild (SAG), the nation's largest labor union for working actors, has jumped into the Newsweek fray.

Yesterday, SAG National LGBT Actors Committee chair Jason Stuart condemned a recent Newsweek column that questioned gay actors' abilities to convincingly play straight roles.

The piece was written by journalist Ramin Setoodeh, who is gay.

"Intentional or not," Stuart wrote in a prepared statement, "Ramin Setoodeh's wrongheaded argument sends a damaging and false message that we are limited in the roles we are able to play."

Stuart continued, "This committee was formed to provide support to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender actors so that they no longer need to feel as if they must hide who they are in order to work in this business.

"Unfortunately, harmful attitudes like those of Setoodeh are used to pressure actors to stay in the closet. Our work is clearly not done and we will continue to fight to end fear within the acting community that being open about who you are means the end of your career. I'm an actor; it's not who I am but what I can play that counts."

In case Newsweek editors haven't noticed, this controversy most definitely has legs.

Which isn't surprising.

Since the passage of Proposition 8 in 2008, which banned same sex marriage in California, the gay community and its allies have never been more consistently vocal in standing up for themselves since the height of the AIDS epidemic.

President Barack Obama, for example, has been feeling the heat over "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and other policies, the Mormon church continues to take hits for its role in the passage of Proposition 8, and gays and lesbians become outraged whenever someone like Setoodeh or gay director Todd Holland suggest that gay actors should stay in the closet.