

1. Equal Rights

I believe that all citizens, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender citizens, are deserving of equal treatment under the law, access to the same opportunities and subject to the same responsibilities, regardless of their age, race, gender, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or other inherent characteristics.

Circle: Yes or No

Comments:

Yes, I unequivocally support the civil rights of LGBT people and all people under the law and have stood for these values as an organizer and activist for many years. As a junior in high school I organized with other LGBT students and our straight allies to create our school's first gay/straight alliance. I am currently on the adult board of iNSIDE oUT, a youth-led coalition of gay/straight alliances in high schools around the Triangle, and am looking forward to organizing with the LGBTQ Center of Durham as they build capacity and establish a stronger community presence. I feel strongly that LGBT equality is a critical part of the struggle for liberation and self-determination for all people.

2. Non-Discrimination

- A. Public Employment:** In North Carolina, it is legal to fire or refuse to hire someone just because they are lesbian, gay, bisexual, heterosexual or transgender. Polls have shown that 74% of North Carolinians support legislation that would ban employment discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity or expression by state and local governments. (1) Would you support such a provision at the local level?

Circle: Yes or No

Please explain your answer:

Yes, I would support local legislation to provide protection to LGBT people in their employment. We now live in a state where a person can legally marry their same-sex partner but then be legally fired because of it. This has the real potential to affect people's jobs and lives. I am particularly concerned with employment protection for transgender people as they are even more likely to lose job opportunities due to their gender identity and expression, and especially for transgender people of color, who also face issues of racial discrimination on the job. I believe that both legislation and community action are needed to address these issues.

B. Public Accommodations: North Carolina law does not currently prohibit public accommodations, such as restaurants and hotels, from denying service to customers on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity or expression. Would you support protections for LGBT people in public accommodations?

Circle: Yes or No

Please explain your answer:

Yes, I would support legislation to provide protection for LGBT people in public accommodations. There is no question that LGBT people still face this completely unjustifiable discrimination. This is another important civil rights issue that needs to be addressed both through legislation and community organizing.

Do you believe that transgender and gender non-conforming individuals should be able to use the restroom that best conforms with their gender identity and expression?

Circle: Yes or No

Please explain your answer:

Yes, I believe that people should be able to use whichever restroom they feel best fits their identity. A daily struggle over something as simple as bathroom usage is an unnecessary stress that no one should be subjected to. Additionally, I see no reason that single-stall bathrooms should be gendered at all and believe that gender-neutral restrooms should be provided whenever possible.

3. Sex Education

In 2009, the legislature passed H.B. 88, the Healthy Youth Act. This law allows parents of public school students to choose between "abstinence only" sex education programs and comprehensive programs that emphasize abstinence while providing students with accurate information about contraception and disease prevention. Would you support the continued implementation of the Healthy Youth Act and oppose attempts to weaken the sexual health education curriculum?

Circle: Yes or No

Please explain your answer:

Yes, I fully support comprehensive sexual education in schools and would oppose any attempts to return to an "abstinence-only" curriculum. Young people have the right to information about their bodies and their sexuality and adults should provide this information in responsible age-appropriate ways from a young age. Abstinence-only programs have been shown to increase

sexually transmitted infection rates and teen pregnancy and I believe North Carolina's students deserve better.

4. Anti-LGBT Statewide Legislation

Senate Bill 2 allows for magistrates and registers of deed to "opt-out" of performing marriages if doing so would violate their religious beliefs. This bill is discriminatory not only to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals, but is harmful against all North Carolinians. Do you support Senate Bill 2 or other local or statewide measures allowing civil servants to opt out of portions of their job?

Circle: Yes or No

Please explain your answer:

No, I strongly oppose Senate Bill 2 and any other attempts to use religious freedom as an excuse to allow discrimination. People whose jobs require them to oversee marriages that they believe are prohibited by their faiths are free to leave those jobs and continue practicing their faith in complete freedom.

5. Discriminatory Schools.

North Carolina law currently allows taxpayer money to fund private and religion-based schools that discriminate against gay or transgender children and/or their parents. Would you vote for legislation that excludes these schools from taxpayer funding?

Circle: Yes or No

Please explain your answer:

Yes. I strongly oppose voucher systems that provide public money to private schools including private religious schools. In addition to discrimination against LGBT students, these schools often discriminate against children of color, children with special needs, and low-income children who can not afford to provide transportation or overcome other barriers to attendance. This is a clear violation of the US Constitution and I was disappointed that the NC Supreme Court recently upheld this program.

6. Electeds for Equality. Equality NC currently hosts a political peer network ("Electeds for Equality") devoted to education and engagement on issues impacting LGBT North Carolinians. Is it important to you to understand the legal and policy issues impacting the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community and engage in dialogue around LGBT issues?

Circle: Yes or No

Please explain your answer:

Yes, it is very important to me to understand legal issues impacting the LGBT community and I would like to learn more about this group.

7. Marriage Equality

Marriage Equality is the law of North Carolina as of 10/10/14 and the law of the entire nation after 6/26/15. Did you support marriage equality before these rulings?

Circle: Yes or No

Please explain your answer:

Yes, I supported marriage equality before these legal rulings were made. I have always believed that same-sex couples should have the same partnership rights and access to civil protections, insurance, immigration, adoption, and other benefits as different-sex couples.

Will you work to protect full access to marriage equality for same-sex couples in your community and in North Carolina?

Circle: Yes or No

Please explain your answer:

Yes, I will work to protect marriage equality for same-sex couples in North Carolina, as well as supporting efforts to provide essential services like health insurance to everyone regardless of relationship status.

8. Sponsorship of Ordinances

Would you be willing to Sponsor or Co-Sponsor ordinances addressing any of the issues outlined above?

Circle: Yes or No

Please explain your answer:

Yes, I would be willing to sponsor or co-sponsor ordinances related to these issues. I am specifically interested in looking into whether there is a need for more gender-neutral bathrooms in city buildings and what non-discrimination policies the city could pursue for employment and public accommodations that include protections for sexual orientation and gender identity. I am also excited to support SONG's efforts to encourage the city and the police department to adopt fair Standard Operating Procedures for police interactions with transgender and gender nonconforming people.

Thank you for completing our questionnaire!

I request that Equality NC PAC consider my candidacy for endorsement in the 2015 elections.



Candidate Signature

8/14/2015

Date

**Please return this questionnaire by August 17, 2015 to: Crystal M. Richardson
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