



City Council Candidate Questionnaire

Please answer the questionnaire as completely as possible. Complete the questionnaire and **e-mail** your responses to rich.g.bailey@gmail.com by close of business on **Thursday, April 7** to be considered for endorsement by Stonewall Democrats. Responses may also be **mailed to SDA, PO Box 40898, Austin, Texas 78704**, but must be received (not postmarked) by that deadline. Additionally, please bring a **SIGNED hardcopy** of your responses with you to the **Candidate Forum and Endorsement meeting on Monday, April 11, at the Travis County Commissioners Court Room** (314 W. 11th St.). We must have your SIGNED questionnaire before we can consider endorsing you. **In order to be eligible for the SDA endorsement you MUST be a Democrat.**

Please limit your responses to no more than ONE or TWO sentences per question, with the exception of Questions #5, #10, and #15. Please attach a brief biography and summary of your qualifications.

1. Do you wish to receive the endorsement of the Stonewall Democrats of Austin (SDA)?

Yes, I would be honored.

2. Should you receive this endorsement, would you publicize our endorsement in your campaign advertisements and campaign literature?

Yes. Absolutely.

3. Please tell us why you are seeking the endorsement of SDA. Do you have a history of involvement in Democratic politics? If so please briefly describe this history.

I am seeking this endorsement because I am a proud Democrat, a proud supporter of LGBT rights, and am proud to be Austin's first openly gay City Council member. I have a long history of involvement in Democratic politics. In 1990 I worked on the successful Ann Richards gubernatorial campaign, and later worked in her administration launching AmeriCorps in Texas. I am also an active donor to local and national Democratic candidates and the Travis County Democratic Party.

4. Why are you seeking this public office? (Please be brief)

I have been involved in this community for more than 20 years, but serving on the City Council has given me the chance to contribute in a different way. I am running for re-election to the Austin City Council because I love Austin and want to continue working to make it the best place it can be. My record shows that I listen to all perspectives, work hard to get the facts, and use common sense to solve problems, and I will always do my best to make reasonable decisions that are in the best interest of the entire community.

5. In your view, do the words "homosexual" and "heterosexual" describe a deep-seated, possibly genetically determined orientation of an individual or only the kind of sexual activities in which an individual engages?

I don't know for sure, but I think a person's sexual and/or gender identity is as inherent as the color of his/her eyes.

6. How familiar are you with Out Youth Austin? If elected, would you support increased funding for this program?

I have been friends with several OutYouth board members over the last several years, and I know that for more than 25 years OutYouth has provided a safe haven for one of our city's most disenfranchised populations. The work of OutYouth has impacted numerous young people to help them succeed, and I am committed to supporting their programs in any way I can.

7. If elected, would you support increased funding for the work of AIDS Services of Austin?

Yes, I am currently serving as the Chair of the Council's Public Health and Human Services Committee and have focused on prioritizing our social service resources to better support the basic needs of our most vulnerable neighbors. The work of ASA certainly fits into this category.

8. If elected, would you act to increase recruitment of LGBT employees for the police, fire and emergency medical services?

Yes, I support increasing recruitment efforts to achieve diversity across all City services, including LGBT community members within public safety units, and since my first month on the job, I have participated in police officer training to help educate cadets about LGBT issues. I am very proud of the fact that our City is the only City in Texas with an open and active LGBT organization in our Police Department, and also has an LGBT Fire organization.

9. Do you think that the Austin Police Department is doing everything it can to make its officers aware of and sensitive to the rights and dignity of Austin's LGBT citizens?

Every organization has room for improvement. I have developed a strong working relationship with our police department and have done everything in my power to make sure officers are aware of and sensitive to the rights and dignity of Austin's LGBT residents. In addition to participating in officer training, I am a convening member of the newly formed Hate Crimes Task Force, which brings our law enforcement, criminal justice and advocacy organizations to the table to address bias-related incidents in our community. I have also encouraged full participation in events like PRIDE and recruited Chief Acevedo to lead the auction at this year's HRC banquet.

10. Describe a step you would take, or proposal you would make as a member of Austin's City Council that would specifically benefit Austin's LGBT community.

In my first term on Council I have helped score many small and large victories for the LGBT community. From ensuring the AGLCC (the LGBT Chamber of Commerce) could apply for funding like all other minority chambers, to ensuring LGBT employees' partners were eligible for COBRA-like benefits, I have been involved in and/or supported my colleagues involvement in every LGBT-positive activity the City has undertaken during my term of service. After working with folks from the Hispanic, African American and Asian American communities on their efforts to build City-partnered community spaces, if elected to a second term, I would like to explore what it would take to create a useful community space for the LGBT community. I am also particularly proud of my involvement with QueerBomb during last year's PRIDE celebration, sponsoring their official proclamation and helping promote an event that was inclusive of all members of the LGBT community. That was in addition to co-sponsoring the City's partnership agreement with PRIDE, as well.

11. Do you believe LGBT people should have the same rights to be foster and adoptive parents as heterosexuals?

My partner Kayla is the legal adoptive parent of our son and daughter, so of course I whole-heartedly support LGBT adoption. I just wish it were easier and less expensive.

12. Do you believe LGBT individuals should be protected against discrimination in employment on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity?

Yes. I just wrote and sent a letter that was read at the House Committee on Economic and Small Business Development on March 30th supporting Villareal's House Bill 665, adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the State's non-discrimination act.

13. Do you support or oppose government recognition of same-gender marriage?

I support it.

14. Do you believe that public schools should institute rules and policies to prohibit harassment and discrimination against LGBT students?

I believe that LGBT students, teachers and administrators should be added to and protected by the same rules that protect their colleagues from discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, disability, sex and religion.

15. If elected, how would you stay informed of the concerns and interests of your LGBT constituents?

I think it would be difficult not to stay informed, considering that my staff and I, and so many of our friends are active members of the LGBT community. I am proud to be the first call at City Hall for members of the LGBT community who need help on *any* issue, and proud to be a Council Member who is responsive and accessible to all citizens of Austin, not just those with connections or those who shout the loudest.

16. Have you attended functions in Austin's LGBT community and, if so, which?

I have been an active donor, fundraiser, organizer, volunteer and participant in the LGBT community, and was honored to be elected the first openly LGBT member of the Austin City Council in 2008. My most recent involvement has been as an active volunteer and donor for Equality Texas and Atticus Circle; my partner and I are also HRC Federal Club Council members and regularly attend HRC events, AGLIFF events, and while they lasted, attended many AGLCC luncheons. I have been endorsed by the Victory Fund this year, just as I was during my 2008 campaign, and have participated in local/state events for the Victory Fund, too.