

2022 Texas Candidate Questionnaire

Susan Hays
Texas Agriculture Commissioner

All Texas Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

While Ag Commissioner is less relevant to the LGBTQ+ community than other offices, I want to say I am a strong supporter of LGBTQ+ rights. I have served on the EQTX board and have advocated for civil rights for my entire legal career, including working with the Gill Foundation on a Texas nondiscrimination campaign in 2015. As Ag Commissioner I will work to encourage the participation of LGBTQ+ in ag whether as farmers, ranchers, or on the processing/retail side. About eighty percent of the TDA budget is for school lunches and food for the elderly and people with disabilities who are food insecure. I will ensure that that and all programs are administered fairly and include outreach to communities who may have been excluded or discouraged by prior officeholders.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

Yes. I have only voted in the Democratic primary (and never in any other) and have worked for Democratic candidates and the party for more than 25 years.

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

I am an attorney with extensive legislative experience. I came to the Ag race via my work on cannabis policy and my frustrations with the incumbent's poor work implementing the hemp program.

My family has ranched in Texas since the 1860s including in Jones, Runnels, and Brown Counties. My husband and I own land in Brewster County where we are growing hemp and hops, and help our neighbors with their vineyard.

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

First a thorough assessment of operations at TDA then a housecleaning. TDA has rural hospital and economic development programs that are rotting in the basement. Using the office to support rural communities (and show them that Democratic policies help rural Texas, just as LBJ did with rural electrification) along with advocating for legalizing cannabis will be significant efforts.

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

Absolutely. The support of Stonewall is very important to me.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create a friendly environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

I will start by making sure anyone who is LGBTQ and has (likely) been hiding out at TDA knows they will be supported and valued. Ag has a long history of discrimination in government services (See the Pigford cases and ongoing USDA efforts to make that right). I will be very public that TDA services are for everyone and encourage women, people of color and LGBTQ+ folks to get engaged in agriculture.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

Of course I will.

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

Yes, and look for ways to extend it through programs TDA administers such as food services.

If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support state legislation and/or constitutional amendments pertaining to: A. LGBTQ Couples adopting and providing foster care?

Not applicable, but I would publicly support it.

B. Supporting the repeal of the sodomy law that was ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court?

Same for repealing Penal Code 21.06 (and the abortion criminalization statues that were never repealed).

C. Supporting safe schools for LGBTQ students?

Same, but applicable as TDA administers school lunch programs and ag education programs giving me a foot in the schoolhouse door.

D. Supporting the repeal of the Texas Marriage/Civil Union Amendment?

Not applicable to the office, but would publicly support it.
#LovelsLove

If applicable to your office, how would you address the recent passage of H.B. 25 regarding Transgender Student Athletes ability to participate based on their gender assigned at birth.

Not applicable but will look for opportunities to support it.
#LetKidsPlay

If applicable to your office, how would you address S.B. 8, the state's Abortion Bill, including private citizen's ability to report anyone involved in supporting report?

Not applicable, but in my legal practice I have worked on abortion issues for 20+ years, including supporting the legal efforts against SB 8 and co-founding Jane's Due Process. I will continue to use my voice to seek equality and expose how damaging to healthcare SB 8 and similar laws are.

What specific ideas do you have and/or what current legislation would you support to improve our state economy and address the income inequality and growing poverty rate in Texas, especially as respects recovery from COVID19?

Supporting rural hospitals and healthcare by advocating for Texas

to take the medicaid waiver and maximize the amount of our federal tax dollars that come back to Texas. Rural communities cannot thrive without a public school system and a hospital/ access to healthcare.

If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support efforts to provide better funding for health care and better health care options for all Texas residents?

Very applicable given the rural hospital program. I would immediately scrape together the funds to get dedicated policy wonks working in TDA to address these issues, then advocate for a bigger share of the state budget to go toward health care, including by legalizing cannabis and dedicating revenue to public health issues, including mental healthcare.

If applicable to your office, what specific ideas do you have to overhaul the Texas Power Grid?

N/A, but will find ways to talk about it via rural economic development such as by including more alternative energy.

If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support legislation restoring previous funding for HIV prevention in Texas including access to PrEP?

N/A, but see above re healthcare funding.

If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support legislation addressing reparative/conversion therapy in Texas?

N/A but would support this and any other legislation that outlaws cruelty.

If applicable to your office, what are your ideas for immigration reform in the state level?

Texas ag needs labor, and we as a state need to turn away from performance politics and be honest about our labor shortages. I feel very strongly that we Democrats need to articulate a new vision for immigration and the border by making Texas's needs known, supporting the humanitarian care of refugees at the border, and advocating for immigration law reform. This includes the funding to adequately support the legal system, refugee care, and the processing of immigrants. It's time to create a real and

functional “line” for those who want to come to the United States.

In particular we need to do better by the kids. I had the pleasure of working with Rochelle Garza on the ‘Immigrant Jane’ cases helping refugee unaccompanied minors obtain abortion care and fighting the Trump administration in federal courts. The conditions for minors have never been good. Access to any healthcare is awful. We Democrats need to be loud about humanitarian-driven change to immigration policies.

What could the state do to improve COVID19 reponse and to prepare for the next pandemic?

Anything would improve it. Support science. Support local public health authorities. Leaders need to lead on getting vaccinated and taking safety precautions. The roll out of vaccines purposely underutilized HEB -- a company famous for its logistical prowess. As for TDA, better support of rural hospitals from getting PPE out to acquiring more ventilators. (I spent the pandemic where there is one hospital with 25 beds and 3 ventilators to service three entire counties.)

Would you lead or support legislation to require mandatory sexual harassment and Equal Employment Opportunity training similar to the resolution passed in the U.S. Senate that requires Senators, staff, and interns to complete that training each session and submit certification to be published online that their office’ fulfilled the requirements?

Yes. And include the lobby. Lobbyists harass staff. Senators and Representatives harass lobbyists. But training isn’t enough (and can be merely performative if poorly implemented). There needs to be an effective mechanism to report and address bad behavior -- particularly by elected officials -- then fairly descalate the behavior and put a stop to it, while not hiding the problem in a locked file cabinet.

What are your ideas to respond to evidence of climate change?

Promote sustainable agriculture and diversify ag in Texas. Cattle are about 50% of what Texas ag produces. We need other meat sources such as bison which are better for grasslands and other products such as more fruits and vegetables. Climate change will destroy Texas ag if not addressed, so the Ag Commissioner

should be a proponent of addressing the change and minimizing its causes.

If applicable to your office, how would you address voter suppression in Texas and work to expand access to voting by eligible voters?

I spent most of 2020 representing the Harris County Clerk as he was sued every time he did anything to make it easier and safer to vote during the pandemic. As a candidate I will be ready to fight those fights again. As Ag Commissioner I will look for opportunities to educate young people and others about their voting rights and encourage voter participation.

In your opinion and applicable to your office, what needed to happen in the past redistricting cycle?

If you mean the 2010 cycle, we should have challenged the map on SD 17 as well as SD 10. If you mean 2020, we Democrats should have knocked on doors (then stepped back 6 feet). Once those legislative races were lost there was not much that could be done. Those members who did not plan on running again should have kept those plans to themselves and fought for their districts. Members should have also fought the 'packing' when it benefited them. As for my office, thankfully they can't redistrict the whole state.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

I am not member (I live in Austin and Alpine.)

2022 Texas Candidate Questionnaire

Elizabeth Ginsberg
State Representative, Texas House District 108

All Texas Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

As an attorney, I have represented members of the LGBTQ+ community throughout my career. I will work in the Legislature to assure that the LGBTQ+ community is treated fairly without explicit or implicit bias and discrimination.

Years ago, I represented a gay man ending a long term relationship and ensuing litigation. This was before gay marriage was legal, so there was little framework for how the relationship should be concluded legally. It was challenging and made me realize that there needed to be some legal recognition of these relationships. Further, because the law was murky in this area, my client's partner filed a complaint with a state board overseeing my client's profession. I cannot discuss the merits for confidentiality reasons, but we were shocked when the first words spoken by the members of the board (who were appointed by Rick Perry) were tell us about your gay lifestyle, and my client was interrogated by the state over matters unrelated to his profession. It was shocking and made me realize extremism is taking root in our state, and we must all oppose this type of prejudice and discrimination.

To increase my understanding of issues that impact the LGBTQ community in my legal practice, I have sought further understanding from my brother in law, Judge Carl Ginsberg, regarding his work to legally change gender markers and what the legal procedure is to make such changes. I would work to amend Texas law to codify these procedures.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall

Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

I make such an affirmation. I have been a regular voter in Democratic Primaries for at least 15 years. Before Democrats contested judicial races in Dallas County, I did vote in Republican primaries because I am an attorney and believe in voting to make sure we have a qualified judiciary.

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

I have deep roots in House District 108. I am an attorney in private practice representing individuals and small businesses, many of whom live in the district. I have been a resident of the district continuously for more than 25 years, and raised my two daughters here.

I have been an active volunteer with the Dallas County Democratic Party as precinct chair (6 years), Vice President of Programs for Preston Hollow Democrats (3 years), Senate District 16 Platform and Resolutions Co-Chair (2018, 2020), and active volunteer on numerous campaigns (judicial, Rep. John Turner, Senator Nathan Johnson, Rep. Colin Allred, Council member Jaynie Schultz, Amy Klobuchar).

As an attorney I have volunteered with the Texas Civil Rights project on their 2020 election protection team, and i have volunteered through DVAP representing the homeless and indigent in divorces and estate matters. I have taken pro bono appointments from judges representing persons being evicted.

I also been a school volunteer and Girl Scout leader.

Through these experiences I know this district, I know the issues, and I understand the Democrats approach on these issues.

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

My priority is to work to preserve our democracy. We must roll back the extremist and draconian legislation passed this last legislative session, especially those that specifically target

the LGBTQ communities. I pledge to work to roll back Senate Bill 8 also known as the abortion ban, House Bill 25 limiting the participation of transgender students in sports, and some of the measure in SB 1 passed during special session that has added additional burdens on voter access to the ballot box.

Also, Texas has more anti-LGBTQ and anti-trans legislation than any other state. When I am elected to the Texas State House, my aim is to not only roll back the extremism, hate and fear perpetuated by this type of legislation but to also invest in resources to combat the negative effect on the mental health of transgender as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer youth.

I would vocally reject any bill rooted in fear, discrimination and disinformation, including any notion that there is rampant voter fraud or “stealing of elections.”

I also plan to focus on issues that affect all Texans -- the power grid and education. See response below related to the power grid. Regarding education, there are three areas of focus -- 1) fully funding a quality public education through increased state funding and allow local governments to reduce property taxes; 2) assure that special education literacy programs are accessible to all children in Texas who need additional services; 3) empower teachers to teach critical thinking by ending the micromanagement of curriculum under the guise of CRT and by banning books.

Finally, the incumbent in the race has not been accessible through Town Halls and district office availability. I have learned from experienced state representatives that accessibility and helping constituents access their state government is one of the most important parts of this job, and I am committed to facilitating such access for all in the district -- not just special interests.

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

A Stonewall endorsement is one I would be proud to receive. I anticipate having a mailer highlighting endorsements. I would also include social media posts featuring the Stonewall

endorsement, email announcements and featuring the endorsement on my website.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create a friendly environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

In hiring staff, I would prioritize experience, and an ability to examine the world from varied points of view which would include being a member of the LGBTQ community. I value staff with a variety of experiences and backgrounds, and LGBTQ friendliness is a necessity. I would not tolerate harassment or discrimination within the office or from outside, and would put procedures in place to assure reporting concerns or instances of discrimination.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

Yes, I consider meeting with and listening to all constituencies, including the LGBTQ community, an important responsibility of any State Representative.

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

Yes.

If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support state legislation and/or constitutional amendments pertaining to: A. LGBTQ Couples adopting and providing foster care?

I believe LGBTQ couples should be permitted and encouraged to adopt and provide foster care. I would support legislation prohibiting discrimination in considering whether an LGBTQ person should be able to adopt or serve as a foster parent. I would also require training for staff to address implicit bias against the LGBTQ community.

B. Supporting the repeal of the sodomy law that was ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court?

I support the repeal of the sodomy law.

C. Supporting safe schools for LGBTQ students?

I support safe schools for LGBTQ students who are some of the most vulnerable and at risk students in our schools. I would support legislation reinstating the LGBTQ youth resources listed on the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services website. I support increasing investments through state and/or federal funding of multi-tiered systems of support to address learning loss rooted in the social-emotional effects of the pandemic. LGBTQ students were at most risk during the pandemic if they did not have the safety net in a school environment due to the pandemic. I support additional budget dollars to the School Safety Allotment for social, emotional, mental health, and school climate strategies. Two key bills that did not pass during the legislative session that I would have supported include: SB 406 that would have required school boards and superintendents to receive training in trauma-informed schoolwide practices and SB 2063 that would have provided alternatives to suspension or expulsion for lower-level student conduct related to substance use. Many student behaviors and especially some of the experiences of our LGBTQ youth are rooted in trauma and other mental health concerns and our children should not be denied a quality education or be part of the school to prison pipeline due to that trauma. What these children need are the resources and the support for a successful future.

D. Supporting the repeal of the Texas Marriage/Civil Union Amendment?

I support the repeal of the Texas Marriage/Civil Union Amendment. It is wrong to have our Texas Constitution in direct conflict with the United States Constitution.

If applicable to your office, how would you address the recent passage of H.B. 25 regarding Transgender Student Athletes ability to participate based on their gender assigned at birth.

I would advocate for and support the repeal of HB 25. The law only serves to marginalize our most vulnerable children and appeal to the right wing of the Republican party. This law is a solution looking for a problem. The parents of transgender children I have met are consumed with fairness, and I trust them completely to make sure their children do not have any unfair competitive advantage.

If applicable to your office, how would you address S.B. 8, the state's Abortion Bill, including private citizen's ability to report anyone involved in supporting report?

I would advocate for and support the repeal of SB 8. Additionally, I would work to repeal the law requiring records being kept for abortion procedures outside of regular medical records that is currently required. I believe it is violation of a patient's right to privacy and there is no legitimate state interest for requiring such records. Eliminating these records would limit the ability of a person to file a suit against a provider because it would make obtaining records to support the claim more challenging implicating HIPPA directly.

What specific ideas do you have and/or what current legislation would you support to improve our state economy and address the income inequality and growing poverty rate in Texas, especially as respects recovery from COVID19?

Texas has a relatively strong economy that has been put at risk by the extremist Republican agenda. I am a capitalist, but capitalism must have some guardrails to preserve a democracy. The growing income inequality is not consistent with a healthy democracy. We need to consider raising the minimum wage, offering child care incentives and increasing access to health care so that every Texas who wants to work can do so and earn a living wage. I consider the long term investments to be critical to improve income inequality in Texas. The most important long term investment is education, including 1) ensuring every child can read by third grade, and making remedial assistance available for every child not meeting that standard; 2) offering a rigorous curriculum requiring critical thinking; 3) offering career preparation tracks tied to job demand and job projections; 4) continuing to support a robust community college system that offers career training for in demand, high paying jobs.

When anti-LGBTQ legislation was making it's way through the Texas Legislature, many business leaders formally and publicly condemned such legislation. There is an economic case for equality and bills that seek to reduce diversity are bad for businesses still struggling from the pandemic. Discriminatory policies make it difficult for companies to attract a diverse

workforce and why I will fight against bills rooted in discrimination and fear.

Texas needs to be a place where the brightest, most innovative people want to work and that requires reversing the right wing extremist agenda advanced by this Republican party that discriminates against women, the LGBTQ community and minorities.

If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support efforts to provide better funding for health care and better health care options for all Texas residents?

I support the expansion of Medicaid and through legislation to create a more robust insurance exchange. Expanding Medicaid would provide coverage for close to 1 million Texans who currently are not eligible and don't have health insurance. We should not be leaving tax dollars on the table when we could be bringing those funds back to Texas and helping Texans.

I would also support the science behind vaccines and would support wider availability and use of vaccinations to protect public health. I would also continue to support funding of widely available mental health services and support more funding for women's healthcare and reproductive healthcare to reduce maternal mortality rates as well as ensure high quality pre and postnatal care.

If applicable to your office, what specific ideas do you have to overhaul the Texas Power Grid?

The power grid failure is the result of decades of deregulating the power industry and ignoring the consumer and business needs for a dependable system. In the short term, weatherization and maintaining the supply of natural gas, and updating systems will be necessary. Long term, alternate energy supplies made possible by new technologies such as wind power with improved battery potential, could address a part of the problem. However, under the current system, the cost of failure is borne by consumers. I believe natural gas producers engaged in price gouging that would be illegal if charges were made directly to the consumer. I believe the risk of failure should be borne by the energy suppliers and they can contract with gas producers to

avoid the distortions of cost by high demand during a very short period of time.

If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support legislation restoring previous funding for HIV prevention in Texas including access to PrEP?

I would support legislation related to restoring funding for HIV Prevention in Texas. I believe it is the moral and fiscally responsible thing to do. I also believe that PrEP should be largely available and that we should invest in community education programs to ensure those at risk for HIV can get access to health screenings as well as biomedical HIV prevention options like PrEP.

If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support legislation addressing reparative/conversion therapy in Texas?

I would support legislation banning reparative/conversion therapy in Texas. There is no objective science supporting such therapy and does long term psychological damage to patients. Legislation like this that has been proposed in the Texas Legislature is based on fear, discrimination and disinformation and as I stated previously, if elected to the Texas State House, I will seek to prevent bills like these from moving forward.

If applicable to your office, what are your ideas for immigration reform in the state level?

Immigration is a federal issue and I believe Texas should defer to the federal government. I believe that Texas should seek a guest worker program from the Federal Government so that seasonal immigration can be normalized, much the way it was normalized throughout history. I oppose the actions by Governor Abbott and the State of Texas in building a wall and attempting to arrest immigrants on trespassing charges, which are nothing more than political theater for the right-wing base. The persons arrested are not able to be processed in a timely way as required by the Constitution, and should not be arrested for misdemeanor trespass. Currently the undocumented are being held for months at a time in overcrowded facilities and not receiving due process. These are serious constitutional violations that are a waste of state taxpayer funds but also provide additional burdens on local

jail facilities especially in rural areas that can't handle the number of cases on their dockets.

What could the state do to improve COVID19 reponse and to prepare for the next pandemic?

I would listen to the science regarding testing and vaccine recommendations and empower local counties and cities to have a pandemic plan that reflects their regional needs for testing, vaccinations, mask mandates, and hospital beds, equipment and personnel, with support provided by the state. I would also require training as part of physician and other health professionals license renewals to “cross train” to assist in pandemic response so that some relief can be offered to front line workers.

Would you lead or support legislation to require mandatory sexual harassment and Equal Employment Opportunity training similar to the resolution passed in the U.S. Senate that requires Senators, staff, and interns to complete that training each session and submit certification to be published online that their office' fulfilled the requirements?

Yes, I would support such legislation. This is a subject I would be willing to lead on.

What are your ideas to respond to evidence of climate change?

Listen to the science. Acknowledging the truth of climate change is the first and most important step. As a member of the state legislature, I would consider the science behind addressing climate change, and work to make sure that climate change is considered when making decisions about most legislation. Texas is a place of innovation, and I would work to create opportunities for innovation and technology to address the causes of climate change. The Texas Climate Jobs Project has established goals for alternative energy that creates well-paid jobs that utilize technology to address climate change. This approach is good for business, good for Texans and good for the environment. I would also support incentivizing reduction of a business' carbon footprint. I would work across the aisle to seek support from Republicans who are likely incentivized to consider such changes because of the necessity of attracting new business to Texas and harm caused by increased claims to the insurance industry.

If applicable to your office, how would you address voter suppression in Texas and work to expand access to voting by eligible voters?

I would support efforts to make voting easier such as simplified registration including online registration, wider use of vote by mail and local flexibility to create solutions to make voting accessible such as drive through voting and extended hours. I would work to protect our poll workers from frivolous challenges and liability, and enhance penalties for rogue poll watchers and voter intimidation.

Additionally, I believe that our democracy depends on higher voter participation, and higher voter participation can be achieved by making voting special. I believe we should reduce the number of elections by implementing ranked choice or approval voting. This would eliminate run offs and decrease voter fatigue. I would also support combining some local elections, school board elections, bond elections and constitutional amendment elections to reduce the number of times a participating voter must show up to vote.

In your opinion and applicable to your office, what needed to happen in the past redistricting cycle?

In this last legislative session, the redistricting was guided primarily by partisan politics and did not appear to consider that the growth in our state has been in communities of color and redistricting should reflect that growth. I support a non-partisan redistricting committee to redistrict, and believe that there should be more competitive districts that preserve communities of interest. That did not happen this legislative session particularly when those communities are communities of color.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats

of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

I joined Stonewall Democrats on Labor Day 2021.

2022 Texas Candidate Questionnaire

Freda Heald

State Representative, Texas House District 108

All Texas Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

As a teacher, I've seen kids who are bullied and know how damaging that can be. No child should ever be bullied and certainly not by politicians in Austin. In the Legislature, I will always fight for equality and ensure that our LGBTQ+ neighbors are free to live as their authentic selves.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

I affirm my affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic party. I'm a proud Democrat and have voted as such all my life.

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

The 108th District is my home - I was raised here, raised my children here, and have taught at Temple Emanuel preschool here for 13 years. I have seen first hand the concerns of parents as an educator when they came to me seeking help for their children whether it was for behavioral issues, learning differences, or navigating a global pandemic. Our leaders in Austin are out of touch with the needs of our communities, and I believe we could use a few more educators in Austin who know what it's like to be in the classroom day in and day out.

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

I have three main goals when I am elected. The first is that we increase funding to public schools. We must do better by our children. Our education system is unequal. As an educator and a mother of children with learning disabilities, I know how much a good education can change their lives. The second goal is to repeal SB 8. What the legislature has done to our rights is wrong plain and simple. People who have the ability to give birth should be the ones making the decisions on what happens to their bodies. The third is to protect same sex marriage. My opponent, Morgan Meyer, has done everything possible to derail the work LGBTQIA+ activists have worked for. I want to fix that.

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

I would be proud to receive the endorsement of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas. We would post the endorsement on our website, all of our social media platforms, on literature, and in paid communications.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create a friendly environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

Since I decided to run for office I have worked to build an inclusive campaign, to ensure that everyone feels welcome. I will do the same with my team in Austin. I believe in the power of representation and ensuring that as an elected official I am fighting for all Texans and their right to live as their authentic selves.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

I would be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis.

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

I will have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support state legislation and/or constitutional amendments pertaining to: A. LGBTQ Couples adopting and providing foster care?

I would do everything possible to support LGBTQ couples adopting and providing foster care.

B. Supporting the repeal of the sodomy law that was ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court?

I would support the repeal of the sodomy law that was ruled unconstitutional by the U.S. Supreme Court.

C. Supporting safe schools for LGBTQ students?

I would support any and all legislation for safe schools for LGBTQ students.

D. Supporting the repeal of the Texas Marriage/Civil Union Amendment?

I would support the repeal of the Texas Marriage/Civil Union Amendment.

If applicable to your office, how would you address the recent passage of H.B. 25 regarding Transgender Student Athletes ability to participate based on their gender assigned at birth.

I would work to repeal H.B. 25. I want to ensure there are good counselors at all schools in my district who are not only Trauma informed, but also trained on how best to work with transgender students.

If applicable to your office, how would you address S.B. 8, the state's Abortion Bill, including private citizen's ability to report anyone involved in supporting report?

I will do everything in my power to repeal S.B. 8.

What specific ideas do you have and/or what current legislation would you support to improve our state economy and address the income inequality and growing poverty rate in Texas, especially as respects recovery from COVID19?

We must do more to address inequality and poverty in Texas, including raising the minimum wage and ensuring that workers have access to the PPE and other equipment they need to stay

safe during the pandemic, as well as fully funding our public schools at the state level to ensure our teachers and students have the resources they need, and to help alleviate the property tax burden felt by our working families.

If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support efforts to provide better funding for health care and better health care options for all Texas residents?

I would support legislation to provide funding for healthcare and better health care options for all Texas residents. I believe everyone should have access to high quality affordable healthcare and will work to make it a reality in Texas. In the Legislature, I will fight to expand Medicare to ensure that millions of more Texans have access to healthcare and ensure that every child has health care coverage.

If applicable to your office, what specific ideas do you have to overhaul the Texas Power Grid?

I believe we must take immediate action to fix our state's power grid and ensure that what happened in February of 2021 never happens again. I would follow the example set by El Paso, where their grid is connecting to out of state resources to ensure stability of their grid. I believe we must also make substantial investments into alternative sources of energy and sustainable infrastructure.

If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support legislation restoring previous funding for HIV prevention in Texas including access to PrEP?

First, I would work towards repealing our abstinence-only education programs in schools. Second, I would support any bills concerning restoring previous funding for HIV prevention in Texas including access to PrEP.

If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support legislation addressing reparative/conversion therapy in Texas?

I would work on a bill that would make reparative/conversion therapy against the law. Conversion Therapy has been banned in at least 20 states. I would like to add Texas to that list.

If applicable to your office, what are your ideas for immigration reform in the state level?

I believe the Federal Government needs to urgently pass immigration reform. At the State level I support ensuring that undocumented Texans have access to drivers licenses, and are able to receive in-state tuition at our Universities.

What could the state do to improve COVID19 reponse and to prepare for the next pandemic?

We are once again witnessing the resurgence happen across the country. After two years of this, we should be doing everything in our power to end the pandemic. I support making tests more widely available and making them free. We should also make sure that when someone has contracted the virus, they should be able to take the time off needed to get better without being penalized.

Would you lead or support legislation to require mandatory sexual harassment and Equal Employment Opportunity training similar to the resolution passed in the U.S. Senate that requires Senators, staff, and interns to complete that training each session and submit certification to be published online that their office' fulfilled the requirements?

I absolutely believe in legislation that would require mandatory sexual harassment and Equal Employment Opportunity training. If the bill is not already in the works, I would start it. If students at universities have to fill these out and most businesses do, why should we be any different?

What are your ideas to respond to evidence of climate change?

I know we must take urgent and bold action to address the climate crisis and invest in sustainable infrastructure to meet the energy demands of the 21st century.

If applicable to your office, how would you address voter suppression in Texas and work to expand access to voting by eligible voters?

I would work to repeal SB 1.

In your opinion and applicable to your office, what needed to happen in the past redistricting cycle?

Once again Republican lawmakers resorted to gerrymandering maps, including this district, to try to hold on to their power. I believe we must create an independent redistricting commission

to end the political games and ensure fair elections in the future.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

I have been a member since September 6th, 2021.

2022 Federal Candidate Questionnaire

Kathleen Bailey

Congressional District 5

All Federal Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

My closest friend from childhood is a lesbian. She and her wife have long been good friends of mine and have shared with me their stories of the prejudice they've encountered. Some of it, I saw firsthand. Once the 3 of us were waiting in a line and the two of them were holding one another. A man walked up and snarled that they were freaks. Such hostility is so scarring. These friends are but two of many, many LGB friends of mine who've taught me why it's so important to help combat prejudice against people whose preferences may differ from our own.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

I am a Democrat who's read the Platform completely and affirm my affiliation with it. Although I was an Independent for most of my voting life, I became a full-time Democrat in 2012.

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

After earning PhD in political science from the Univ. of Illinois, I became an intelligence analyst for the USG focusing on foreign weapons of mass destruction capabilities. In this job, I was put on a management track and trained in people, program, and budget management. I became head of my section.

Subsequently, I served in the Executive Branch in Washington, with the highest level job (of three) being Assistant Director of the Arms Control & Disarmament Agency, which required Senate confirmation. Following public service, I became an educator, teaching at university and writing academic books and articles on arms control and foreign policy.

After some years' teaching, my husband and I decided to become small farmers, which we did for 10 years, running our own small business. After his death, I roamed a bit and then returned to Dallas, where I was born, to become a full-time artist. I made a feature film, painted, and produced a book of photography and poetry.

The variety of my experiences have exposed me to many walks of life and I have in-depth understanding on a host of public policy topics, especially education, foreign & defense policies, economy, and agriculture. Additionally, I have been a committed environmentalist since joining the group Zero Population Growth as a college freshman and have supported women's reproductive health rights all of my adult life.

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

If I were to have a choice, I would very much like to serve on the Agriculture Committee to work to reform policies that stand in the way of young farmers getting started and to help small farms and ranches be economical and have fair access to the marketplace. I would also work to reform the industrial approach to food production.

Other areas I would like to work on include foreign affairs and armed services. I would particularly like to work on diversification of the recruitment processes in the US Foreign Service and the

armed services.

The immigration conundrum is also something I would like to tackle, along with economic reforms. I know that there are limitations on what one person can do, but these are the plans I'd like to pursue.

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

I would be so honored to have Stonewall Democrats of Dallas' endorsement and would proudly include the endorsement in my campaign media.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create a friendly environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

I firmly and irrevocably believe in equality, whether it be regarding LGBTQ, race, gender, or other qualities. If people, regardless of orientation, are treated with fairness and respect, they are much more likely to be happy in their jobs.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

If need be, I would. But I would hope it would not be necessary because we should be open to listening to all constituents, regardless of race, creed, orientation, etc.

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

Yes

How can congress play a role to ensure that Rob v. Wade isn't overturned by the Supreme Court?

I'm not sure that Congress can do anything to prevent its overturn; it is up to the courts now. But what I think we can do is prepare the groundwork to make abortion rights the law of the land again in event it is. Legislation is just part of that effort

(which the Biden Administration is already working on), but we should also push hard to amend the Constitution. Short of that, we the Democratic Party must better make the case to the undecided about why abortion rights are so vital to individuals and to our democracy.

How would you lead or support efforts to provide better funding for health care and better health care options for all Texas residents?

I would not lead the charge because I think this issue has received incredible scrutiny and leadership by individuals and groups far more well-versed than any/all Congressfolk. However, I can and would be supportive. I would continue the processes already well underway by trying to focus on a particular concern: maintenance of and access to hospitals and clinics in rural areas.

How would you lead or support an effort to establish universal or single payer health care for the United States of America? Should there be more improvements made to the Affordable Care Act?

There are efforts underway to review and assess the progress we've made under the ACA and I would wait until being briefed on those before making a statement on what else should be done. But with regard to funding, there are subsidies provided for in the BBB Plan that, if not passed, need to be separated from the larger package and passed.

How would you lead or support efforts to ensure the John Lewis Voting Rights Act is enacted?

I would work very, very hard on the issue of voters' rights. The first step is to pass the Freedom to Vote Act, which has near-unanimous Democratic support (including Manchin) in the Senate. It may take a carve-out to pass the filibuster, but I would do whatever I could from the House side to help make that happen. Also I would try to focus the attention of the press and public on the "backdoor" attempts by the Big Lie proponents to replace elections officials with partisan Trump supporters.

Did the Build Back Better Act in your opinion do enough to address the nation's needs?

The frank answer is that there will never be enough done; there will always be needs.

Do you or do you not support ending the filibuster?

I would like to try filibuster reform first. Two worthy ideas are to make individuals who want to speak have to be present for the whole time, and to replace the requirement for 60% to agree with a requirement of a 40% vote to disagree. (Don't forget, the Dems used filibuster very effectively against Trump and there's still a risk we could suffer Trump again.)

What specific ideas do you have and/or what current legislation would you support for recovery efforts for the economy from COVID?

I think that Biden is doing a good job, despite the negative reviews on the subject. I am hesitant to see any more funding due to the inflation problems that persist and the lack of assessment (too soon) of the effects of what's already underway. The risk of additional variants also make firing up the economy too fast problematic. And we need for supply to catch up before stimulating further demand. My focus would be on what government can provide in the way of services rather than directing cash flows to potential consumers.

What could congress do to improve COVID Reponse and to prepare for the next pandemic?

I have full confidence that there will be many reports done on "lessons learned" and believe that the scientific, pharmaceutical, and medical professionals will make extensive recommendations. It will be Congress' job to review and assess those carefully and make calculated decisions.

Would you lead or support legislation to require mandatory sexual harassment and Equal Employment Opportunity training similar to the resolution passed in the U.S. Senate that requires Senators, staff, and interns to complete that training each session and submit certification to be published online that their offices' fulfilled the requirements?

Yes

How will you lead or support efforts for comprehensive immigration reform, especially pertaining to: A. Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM ACT)

This issue has had lots of attention without reaching resolution, so I don't pretend that I have all the answers or even the power to

make a big impact. But, let me address your question by saying what I'd like to see. We need to make a distinction between those that have been here for many years or most of their lives versus those illegally crossing now, or there will unlikely be agreement or progress. Those here for a long time should have a path to citizenship now. Those coming in are a harder issue. If I could call the shots, I would make all accepted into the country eligible for work permits (as with TPSers). And I would stop illegal immigration. (I believe you don't always have to know how something should be done to know that it should be done.)

B. Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

TPS applies to countries that are suffering from significant violence. I think the rights and care being given to TPS individuals is sufficient at present and would not support including them with the DREAMers.

What are your ideas to respond to evidence of climate change?

Anything I'd be able to do would be a drop in the bucket compared to the efforts underway to address climate change. However, what I could do in Congress is to continue to support environmentalism from the bully pulpit, with my votes, and with legislation.

I believe that overpopulation by humans is an enduring problem inextricable from that of climate change and pollution. Thus I think we should carefully evaluate whether to create or extend programs that foster human population growth.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

I joined this year.

2022 Federal Candidate Questionnaire

Tartisha Hill

Congressional District 5

All Federal Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

I believe the LGBTQ community deserves equality like all historically marginalized groups in this country. The LGBTQ+ community has and is experiencing a similar type of discriminatory practices by some as do people of color and some immigrants that are US citizens. I have overheard discussions by some who make homophobic comments and have had to politely ask they not use that language around me. I will always fight for this community to be treated fairly in all aspects of life.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

Yes, I am a Clinton, Obama, Biden Democrat my voting history shows that. I have always voted democratic.

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

I served 6 years on Balch Springs City Council and I have a bachelor's in political science.

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

Once elected, I will introduce and support legislation that helps all Americans. I will represent the American people, not special interests. I will focus on improving access to education for my

constituents and the public at large.

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

Absolutely, I would showcase my endorsement from Stonewall Democrats by printing it on my literature and social media platforms. Yes, I would include it.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create a friendly environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

First, I will seek your recommendations concerning qualified potential staff. I will make it known to any and everyone that discrimination of any type will Not be tolerated in my office.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

Yes, I want all people especially historically marginalized groups to be heard and represented in congress. I will work to pass legislation that supports all Americans.

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

Yes, I believe everyone has the right to feel comfortable at his/her/their place of work. One's sexual orientation should not affect the workplace.

How can congress play a role to ensure that Rob v. Wade isn't overturned by the Supreme Court?

Congress can and should pass legislation like the Women's Health Protection Act, S 1645 / HR 2975 and the Equal Access to Abortion Coverage in Health Insurance Act (EACH Woman Act, S 758 / HR 1692 throughout the country to protect women's rights.

How would you lead or support efforts to provide better funding for health care and better health care options for all Texas residents?

I support expanding Obamacare by including a public option.

How would you lead or support an effort to establish universal or single

payer health care for the United States of America? Should there be more improvements made to the Affordable Care Act?

I would lead or support healthcare policy that is based on income, with no limits. Yes, I believe there should be more improvements to the Affordable Care Act.

How would you lead or support efforts to ensure the John Lewis Voting Rights Act is enacted?

I would lead or support the efforts to ensure that the John Lewis Voting Rights Act is enacted into law. In America, everyone deserves the right to vote.

Did the Build Back Better Act in your opinion do enough to address the nation's needs?

Initially, BBB did address the several critical issues affecting so many Americans. Sadly, much of the important policy ended up being removed. At a minimum, I believe BBB should have pre-k for all, child care tax credits and a language to secure a livable wage for all Americans.

Do you or do you not support ending the filibuster?

I support ending the filibuster. So by doing so would facilitate greater accountability by requiring the members of the House and Senate to go on the record on important votes.

What specific ideas do you have and/or what current legislation would you support for recovery efforts for the economy from COVID?

I think for a incoming freshman, it would be better to support legislation that has already been introduced like mandate mask. I believe current legislation should bolster access to the Internet for all Americans and, as well, offer subsidies for the purchase of computers for those Americans who would qualify for assistance.

What could congress do to improve COVID Reponse and to prepare for the next pandemic?

Make sure adequate funding is available for the CDC and stay ahead of other pandemics by proactive clinical trials and research.

Would you lead or support legislation to require mandatory sexual harassment and Equal Employment Opportunity training similar to the

resolution passed in the U.S. Senate that requires Senators, staff, and interns to complete that training each session and submit certification to be published online that their offices' fulfilled the requirements?

Yes, I would lead or support legislation to have employees take sexual harassment & equal employment opportunity training. Additionally, I will have my staff go through a training I provide.

How will you lead or support efforts for comprehensive immigration reform, especially pertaining to: A. Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM ACT)

I will lead or support efforts for comprehensive immigration reform, with the proviso that eligibility requires asylum seekers may not engage in any sort of criminal activity. If the United States is their only country of residence, they should not be forced to leave. Every person wants the American Dream.

B. Temporary Protected Status (TPS)

I am in support of leading or supporting the TPS by bringing it back and making it stronger. There should be guidelines to have permanent legislation in place.

What are your ideas to respond to evidence of climate change?

We must boldly act to address the climate change already occurring in our nation and around the world. We must better educate people about importance of recycling and its connection to the already prevalent climate crisis.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No.

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

I have never been a member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas. During my service on the Balch Springs City Council, members were not allowed to show any party affiliations.

2022 Dallas County Candidate Questionnaire

Sophia Graham

Constable precinct 5 Dallas County

All Dallas County Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

My family is made up of all different kinds of races of people, when some thing of you personally there is a sense of urgency, in this community text me personal and I need to make sure that it's treated equally

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

I'm a life Long democrat

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

Masters police officers license, ES degree, Deputy Constable experience every single one increasing by serving civil papers and working All types of warrants

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

I plan on providing every staff member with mental health training and bringing the truancy division back to precinct 5

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

I will put it on my social media page

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create an inclusive environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

By attending your meetings and hopefully if there's a staff member that is already in the office, they would come to me and let me know who they are. My staff is going to treat everyone shares and with respect and kindness and professionalism that's all the communities.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

Yes, To ensure that all people are created equally and represented

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

Yes, because it is the right thing to do

How would you handle a situation in which you or a subordinate felt the need to not fulfill all the lawful work duties due to "deeply held religious beliefs"?

I am a law enforcement officer all laws of the state and federal statutes must be followed,

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

4-5 months but I was a member over Constable Cortes

2022 Dallas County Candidate Questionnaire

Michael Orozco

Constable precinct 5 Dallas County

All Dallas County Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

I started my law enforcement career in the Dallas County Constables Office in 1997. The first beat I was assigned to work was in the Oak Lawn/Cedar Springs area for many years. My compassion and empathy grew while dealing with our LGBTQ community on daily bases in a law enforcement capacity. Prior to that, I served honorably in the USMC reserves and knew several gay and lesbians that actively served but could not be open about their sexual orientation. We are all equal and just wanted to serve our country proudly.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

Yes

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

I started my law enforcement career in the constables office since 1997 and have spent close to 25 years serving and working in the constables office.

I have worked in every division of the constables, there was no on the job training needed when I took office.

I have managed on numerous occasions operations of up to 50 officers at a time from different law enforcement agencies.

Possess a Master Peace officer license- highest license you can receive from the State of Texas

Bachelors degree in Business Management

Received and Honorable discharge from USMC

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

Here are some of the things we have accomplished during my first term

We hit the ground running, implemented policies and procedures that increased productivity, efficiency, and streamlined services via technology

I personally hand counted close to 10,000 warrants that my predecessor did not put on the computer. We did, and have actively worked those warrants.

When COVID pandemic first started, I went on social media, radio, zoom talking about tenant rights. Implemented policies and procedures on how to handle COVID declarations. Supported City of Dallas ordinance dealing with evictions related to COVID.

Safely disposed and destroyed via a court order drugs and other contraband that had been sitting in the property since 1995. That was 5 administrations that never addressed the issue.

We donated 51 hand guns and long rifles that once again had accumulated since 1995 and donated to Southwestern Institute of Forensic Sciences to be used in criminal Justice investigations

Our office has returned close to 30k back to litigants that had been sitting in our account since 2001. One litigant received close to 11k that was wrongfully collected on a tax warrant

Our office had the first ever Dallas County peace officer of the year award recipient . No deputy Constable has ever received this award until our deputy Constable rightfully received the award

We spearheaded the effort for all Constables offices to receive body cam videos. We were successful in advocating for these and now all five precincts have body cameras for their deputies

We have created a work schedule that keeps deputies more in neighborhoods than previously before

Judge Sara Martinez, Judge Juan Jasso and myself created the first ever collaboration with Dallas Police Department and Dallas County Sheriffs office to combat domestic violence. Future state legislation in the works because of our success with the collaboration to make our idea state mandated

We are going to beginning Jan 1, 2022 accept referrals in cases dealing with interference with child custody(a criminal charge)

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

The endorsement would be included on my print, social media, and from myself personally. Yes, I would include endorsement on my campaign media.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create an inclusive environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

Unfortunately, we have a high retention rate which is a good thing. We actually had offered a deputy constable position to an openly gay officer, but he turned our offer down at the last minute because he was being offered a promotion from his current department. Dallas County and our office policy have strict policies in place that deters any discrimination due to someone's sexual orientation. Everyone in my office is held to the same standard, no exceptions.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

Yes, as of now I am the point of contact. My personal cell phone number is on my business cards. Additionally, myself or someone from my staff have attended monthly stonewall democrats

meetings.

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

Yes we currently do. Just recently we created a policy on how to deal with transgender individuals when detained or transported to jail. I had also shared that policy with current President and VP of Stonewall Democrats for input and feedback. Also, we have policy in place regarding biased based policing. It not only encompasses racial profiling, but also offers protections to all groups of people.

How would you handle a situation in which you or a subordinate felt the need to not fulfill all the lawful work duties due to “deeply held religious beliefs”?

That would not happen to me, but if a sworn subordinate could not lawfully uphold the oath they swore to. They more than likely would not work at this department anymore.

Justice of the Peace Candidates

As many people faced evictions during the COVID pandemic, how would you or did you ensure that the process is fair and compassionate for people facing it?

I immediately spoke about tenants rights on social media, radio and TV educating people on their tenant rights. We implemented policies and procedures to abide with any Supreme Court of Texas and Federal mandates. I still have and always will educate people on tenant rights when given the opportunity to do so. My deputies also would inform both landlords and tenants when serving eviction citations, about rental assistance programs. Additionally, we trained the deputies if any situation related to COVID-19 related moratorium. The deputies were told to stop any eviction process, call a supervisor, and confer with the court for further guidance or instruction. In the end, our job was not to see how many people we could evict, but how many people we could help.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

Since June 2018

2022 Dallas County Candidate Questionnaire

Dareia Jacobs

Justice of the Peace 4-2

All Dallas County Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

Through my time in media and communications as a TV & radio commentator, author, and educator, I have come in contact with a variety of people. These experiences and conversations have pushed me to understand different points of view that I may not have beforehand. One valuable lesson I have learned is to simply listen and seek to understand. As a straight, cisgender woman, all I can simply do is lean on organizations such as Stonewall Democrats of Dallas to continue to grow in listening to each and every part of the community I seek to serve.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

Yes. I have voted actively as a Democrat since 2012.

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

My experience as a media and communications commentator, educator, and community leader have prepared me to serve as JP for 4-2 with fairness and equality for all.

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

Once elected, I will prioritize restoring trust between the community and the justice system. Additionally, I will seek to

expand access to housing support services in my court, partner with local ISDs in my district to reduce absenteeism in schools.

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

Website, Campaign Literature, etc.

Absolutely!

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create an inclusive environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

I will lean on Stonewall Democrats of Dallas to give input and even potential recruits for my staff. Beyond the hiring, I hope the Stonewall board will stay in contact with me to continue to create an inclusive environment in my court.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

Yes!

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

Yes!

How would you handle a situation in which you or a subordinate felt the need to not fulfill all the lawful work duties due to “deeply held religious beliefs”?

As a Pastor’s wife, I do value my personal religious beliefs. However, as JP it is my duty to uphold the law in my court. In this particular instance, this means upholding a separation of church and state.

Justice of the Peace Candidates

As many people faced evictions during the COVID pandemic, how would you or did you ensure that the process is fair and compassionate for people facing it?

Evictions during the COVID pandemic, and generally speaking,

tend to be the most unfair to our communities of color. A fair and compassionate process begins with partnerships and community education with landlords. I would champion a community education program that seeks to educate tenants on how evictions work but also challenge landlords to not unfairly target or evict communities of color based off statuses such as being a single parent and/or low-income households.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No.

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

I am not currently a member, but will pledge to join before the screenings.

2022 Dallas County Candidate Questionnaire

Sasha Moreno

Justice of the Peace 4-2

All Dallas County Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

The LGBTQ community is one that is near and dear to my heart. My brother is gay and currently engaged. I am honored that my brother and his fiancée asked me to be their wedding officiant for their wedding in April 2022.

Since taking office, I have performed numerous same sex marriages in my courtroom and at wedding venues across DFW. I also make sure to ask individuals what pronouns they would prefer me to use during their wedding ceremonies so they feel accepted for who they are especially at such a special moment in their life.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

Yes I am a Democrat and have voted Democratic my entire life.

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

I am currently serving my 1st term as Dallas County Justice of the Peace 4-2. I am also licensed to practice law in Texas and California.

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

I will continue with my night court program which has proven to be successful. We are the only JP court open twice a month until 7 pm so people can access the court after normal business hours. We also created the court's 1st internship program for students but had to pause the program due to the pandemic. Once it is safe to do so again, we will reopen our internship. We will also try to implement a free in-house mediation program so litigants can settle their case before trial.

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

We will include the endorsement in our campaign materials and across our social media.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create an inclusive environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

I have made it clear to my court staff that discrimination in any form is not acceptable.

When possible, I do encourage my staff to participate in equality seminars and discrimination training so they are aware on how to best communicate and work with any individual that comes to our court. I want to ensure our courtroom provides a safe and friendly environment for anyone regardless of race, age, gender or sexual orientation.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

Yes, of course I would be willing to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis. I wouldn't appoint a liaison as I would rather be involved first-hand in the issues and events affecting the community.

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

Discrimination of any form is not tolerated in my court or in Dallas County.

How would you handle a situation in which you or a subordinate felt the

need to not fulfill all the lawful work duties due to “deeply held religious beliefs”?

I respect everyone’s beliefs regarding spirituality and religion. I personally am a Catholic and attend church and mass regularly. However, the God I believe in is a God that loves and respects everyone. If someone felt differently than my own beliefs, I would respect that. However, discrimination against sexual orientation is not legal or acceptable in my court. If a staff member felt strongly about not performing their responsibilities due to their religious beliefs, we would need to sit down and discuss whether there is a way to work together in the best interest of the community or if my court is the best place for them to work in.

Justice of the Peace Candidates

As many people faced evictions during the COVID pandemic, how would you or did you ensure that the process is fair and compassionate for people facing it?

Since the pandemic began, I have helped lead the county wide eviction efforts with Judge Clay Jenkins. I drafted many of the previous moratorium orders for my fellow JPs and worked hard to get unanimous consent on most of the orders. I also follow the various federal and statewide laws in place to ensure landlords are complying with the COVID guidelines. I am known for dismissing cases if landlords did not comply with them to bring their lawsuit in the first place. I currently have a Dallas County Housing Liaison on-site so people can apply and follow up with her in regards to their pending rental assistance applications. I also have Legal Aide of Northwest Texas on-site so low income individuals can access free legal assistance.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No.

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats

of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

I was previously a member of Stonewall. I believe my membership may have lapsed during the pandemic but I definitely want to join again. Please send a link to rejoin and pay when possible.

2022 Judicial Candidate Questionnaire

Andy Chatham

282nd Civil District Court

All Judicial Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

I was the elected Judge of the 282nd between 2007 and 2015. In my opinion, the most important function a District Judge has is overseeing the people that are placed on probation. The number one problem people face while on probation is substance abuse. For members of the LGBTQ+ community societal scorn is often what leads them to have a substance abuse problem. I do not believe in “cookie cutter” treatment programs. One size does not fit all. For example -- I had a young man that was struggling with probation. He was skipping meetings, testing dirty, and had not done any community service hours. Instead of issuing a warrant for his arrest, I called him and asked him to come to court. He came to court as requested and I talked to him. He trusted me enough to tell me what the real problem was; his parents refused to accept he was gay. Upon being arrested, he lost his job and his apartment and had to move back home. Rather than get him the help he actually needed, they forced him to go to their church and receive their brand of counseling. Needless to say, that only made matters worse. Therefore, I called his dad and scheduled a meeting. The three of us sat down and I had to explain to the dad that I was not going to let his son fail. I explained to him exactly what his son was going to do. He was to start seeing a counselor of my choosing and that it included family meetings. Within six months, the change was remarkable. No more dirty drug tests, a stable job, and a new apartment. He told me that his parents will probably never truly accept him, but that their relationship was better than it ever had been since he came out. After another six

months, I was satisfied he had done all that had been asked and dismissed his case.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

I wholeheartedly affirm the platform and policies of the Dallas County and Texas Democratic Party. I am a lifelong Democrat and have proudly only voted in Democratic Party primaries in Texas, Florida, and Kentucky. I will provide my voting record in Dallas County as soon as possible.

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

8 years of judicial experience

25 years as a licensed attorney working for the Dallas County Public Defender's Office, the Dallas County District Attorney's Office, private practice handling criminal, civil matters, and appellate work

Rated as qualified by the Citizens for a Qualified Judiciary in previous years

Endorsed by the Dallas Morning News in previous years

86% approval rating by the Dallas Bar Association

2021 D Magazine Best Lawyers in North Texas

Endorsed by Stonewall Democrats in 2006 and 2014 (I did not have an opponent in 2010)

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

The main and most important plan is to show up to work every day. While zoom hearings may be necessary during Covid, it is imperative that I am at Court every day. Zoom hearings, if necessary, can be done from the courtroom. I will re-establish my "open door" policy, which is: anybody for any reason can come to court and talk to me about whatever issues they are having on

probation.

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

As I did before, I would proudly place the Stonewall Endorsement on my website, Twitter, and Facebook page.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create a friendly environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

My Court reporter when I held office is gay. I consider him and his partner as good friends who have been to my house. I can't imagine that anyone did not believe that the 282nd when I held office was a friendly environment for everyone.

How would you handle a situation in which you or a subordinate felt the need to not fulfill all the lawful work duties due to "deeply held religious beliefs"?

If your religious beliefs require you to miss work for a spiritual holiday that is not traditionally recognized by Dallas County, by all means you are free to miss work. However, your religious beliefs can not be used as a cloak for bigotry or racism. It will not be tolerated and they can find different job.

Understanding that administrative matters can take up a significant percentage of your work day, what are the most important policies or procedures you've identified as needing improvement

Attendance in Court. Showing up to work every day is the first change. Second (as mentioned above) re-implementing an "open door policy". Third, address the number of people in jail. When I was in office I consistently had some of the fewest people in jail of all the District Courts. Fourth, treat the lawyers that appear before me with respect and decency. Fifth, work with the probation department instead of expecting the probation department to work for me. Sixth, bring public defenders back to the Court.

Do you have ideas to improve access to the courts and court-related services? Yes. If so, what are they?

As Judge, I am a public servant. It is my job to be available and help where I can. I think it is important that people can walk into

court and speak to the judge directly. By creating an atmosphere that is hospitable, it encourages people to come to court if they are having problems. Additionally, I think it is important to waive fees if people cannot afford them. Finally, it is important to find the right fit for people needing court-related services. Whether it be counseling for substance abuse or mental health services. They are all very different and it can be confusing. It is crucial that we find the right fit and that requires a dialogue. I will be there to help in that area.

Do you believe the composition of juries adequately and fairly reflects society at large? Why or why not? If not, what can we do to change this?

In Dallas County, I do. Outside of Dallas County, I do not. I remember what juries looked like 20 years ago in Dallas and they do not look the same today. A lot of that credit goes to the Judges we elected in 2006. We changed the culture of the Dallas County Courthouse. Juror strikes based on race were no longer given a blind eye. Is it perfect? No, but I am satisfied with the progress Dallas County continues to make. The best way to change the system is for people to appear when called for jury duty.

What is your general judicial philosophy?

Be fair to both sides

Treat everyone with respect

Listen to people's problems

Have an open courtroom

Encourage rather than discourage

Send the people to prison that deserve it

Be available, even at home, to the Police that need search and arrest warrants signed

Courtrooms can be very scary places for witnesses or people that are victims of crime, create an atmosphere that lets them know they are not on trial, especially for children who are victims of crime.

Show up to work every day.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our

organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

I have been a member in the past. I don't want to pledge to join simply to curry favor. I think that is disingenuous and insulting to your Organization to pledge if I don't intend to be an active member. I will proudly and with honor display an endorsement, but I don't want to join simply to say I am a member without actually doing anything in the future.

2022 Judicial Candidate Questionnaire

Amber Givens

282nd Civil District Court

All Judicial Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

I believe in marriage equality. In 2015 when the United States Supreme Court handed down the monumental decision that all people have a right to marry in all fifty states, I made myself available to marry couples and continue to do so. I also believe where you spend your money matters. I support LGBTQIA+ owned businesses like Ghost Democracy, Boy Smells and We Are Fluide. Moreover, I am intentional about supporting businesses/ brands that create campaigns to give back during Pride Month like Adidas, Bath & Body Works, Gap and MAC Cosmetics.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

Yes, I do and I am a lifelong Democrat.

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

Judge Amber Givens
3824 Cedar Springs Rd., Ste. 253 | Dallas, Texas 75219
Phone: 214-771-8985 | E-mail: amber@ambergivens.com

EDUCATION

Syracuse University College of Law, Syracuse, New York
Juris Doctor, May 2006

Tuskegee University, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama
B.A. in Political Science, August 2002

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Outstanding Mentor, Dallas Association of Young Lawyers (2021)
- Phenomenal Sister Award, Dallas Women's Initiative (2020)
- Honoree, National Council of Negro Women (2020)
- Nominee, Local Love Awards (2019)
- DeDe McGuire's Empowered to Serve Award (2019)
- Boss Woman of the Year, Boss Women Who Brunch (2018)
- Unity Award Recipient, The City of Dallas (2017)
- Fellow, Texas Bar Foundation (2015)
- Top 25 Women of Dallas, Rolling Out Magazine (2016)
- Top 40 Under 40, Lancaster Chamber of Commerce (2014)

PUBLICATIONS

- Candyce Phoenix (assisted by Judge Amber Givens-Davis), One Texas Judge Givens Back. You Can, Too.; 101 Practice Toolkit: How to Start Your Own Empowerment Program; 101 Practice Toolkit: How to Start Your Own Word of Mouth Series Women in the Profession, A.B.A Young Lawyers Division Spring 2017 Newsletter.

PRESENTATIONS

- Prison Fellowship: Supporting Successful Reentry in Texas, Panel (2021)
- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. Alpha Xi Omega Chapter, Black Women Empowered: Our Voice Our Vote, Panelist (2020)
- EMI Judges Forum, Panelist (2020)
- WFAA Rooted Hair Discrimination, Documentary Participant (2020)
- Texas State Representative Lorraine Birabil's Criminal Justice Virtual Town Hall, Panelist (2020)
- Harmony Community Development Corporation, COVID-19 Getting Your Legal House In Order (2020)
- The Multifaith Initiative to End Mass Incarceration, Panelist (2019)
- American Parole and Probation Association, The Creation of

the Empowerment Program Session Speaker (2019)

- Strengthening The Black Church for the 21st Century, National Prison Summit on Mass Incarceration, Panelist (2018)
- Ignite Conference: Table Leader (February 2017)
- National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice [North Texas/Dallas Chapter]: Keynote Speaker (April 2017)
- Texas A&M University School of Law: Christian Legal Society Panel (April 2017)
- Dallas Minority Attorney Program: Dallas Criminal Courts Panel (April 2017)
- National Urban League Young Professionals (Dallas Chapter): Panelist-Monthly Meeting (March 2017)
- Lancaster Independent School District: Sister to Sister Panel (May 2017)
- Dallas Women Lawyers: Leadership Class Panel (June 2017)
- National Urban League Young Professionals (Dallas Chapter): Panelist-Spring Texas Conference (June 2017)
- DAYL: Panelist-August 2017 CLE
- Dallas Women Lawyers: Law and Leadership Symposium Panel (January 2016)
- Food and Drug Administration: Keynote Speaker-2016 National Black History Celebration (February 2016)
- Ursuline Academy of Dallas: Journey to Success Panel (February 2016)
- Ignite Conference: Table Leader (February 2016)
- Texas Alliance of Black School Educators: Speaker-Spring Conference (March 2016)
- Dallas Minority Attorney Program: Dallas Criminal Courts Panel (April 2016)
- Dallas Continental Societies, Inc.: Speaker-Teen Leadership Forum (April 2016)
- Boys and Girls Club of America: 2016 National Keystone Conference Future Readiness Panel (March 2016)
- Dallas Independent School District: Keynote Speaker-Powerbrokers Luncheon (May 2016)
- Lancaster Independent School District: Sister to Sister Panel (May 2016)
- Dallas Women Lawyers: Leadership Class Panel (June 2016)
- Clara Oliver Elementary: Keynote Speaker-Fifth Grade Graduation (June 2016)

- Dallas Association of Young Lawyers: Coffee with the Court (August 2016)
- Dallas Bar Association: Day of Civility (September 2016)
- American Bar Association: Young Lawyers Division Fall Conference: Women in Politics and Leadership Positions (October 2016)
- Cliff View Church of Christ Fall Festival: Voting Rights Speaker (October 2016)
- Desoto Independent School District: Female Leadership Forum Panel (October 2016)
- Dallas Bar Association: 2016 Diversity Task Force: Diversity Matters Panel Discussion (December 2016)
- Junior League of Dallas' T. Boone Pickens Leadership Institute: Speaker (December 2016)
- Nest Foundation: Child Sex Exploitation and Trafficking Panel (December 2016)
- Lancaster Independent School District: Save Our Students-Speaker (January 2015)
- Food and Drug Administration: Keynote Speaker-2015 National Black History Celebration (February 2015)
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection: Keynote Speaker Women's History Month (March 2015)
- Lancaster Independent School District: Sister to Sister Panel (May 2015)
- West Dallas Community Day of Prayer: Speaker (May 2015)
- Dallas Women Lawyers: Leadership Class Panel (June 2015)
- Training for Excellence: Keynote Speaker (July 2015)
- Desoto Independent School District: Female Leadership Forum Panel (December 2015)
- North Texas National Day of Prayer: Speaker (February 2014)

WORK EXPERIENCE

State of Texas-282nd Judicial District Court, Dallas, Texas
 Presiding Judge, January 2015 - Present

- Preside over felony docket ranging from enhanced theft to capital murder cases, pre-trial hearings, and trials
- Implemented and supervise the Empowerment Program. The Empowerment Program is a ten month supplemental felony

probation program that provides probationers with the necessary life skills and support needed to complete felony probation and 'pay it forward' to the community. The participants are paired with a mentor from the community to assist them. The program's curriculum includes components in these areas: life skills, educational advancement, career planning, and community involvement. The Empowerment Program partners with the following organizations to fulfill the curriculum: Aberg Center for Literacy, Achieve PR, Brebeautified Makeup, Cognosante, Comerica, Community Council, Dallas Life, Dallas County County Clerk's Office, Department of Public Safety, Elite News, Goodwill Dallas, Healthy Hairlines Inc., House of Renewed Hope, Jiffy Lube, Kastl Law P.C., LIFT Education, Merrill Lynch, Mountain View College, PullCorp Media Group, Social Security Administration, SMU, Texas Capital Bank, Texas Women's University, The Davis Law Group, P.C., Toastmasters International, Turner-Baldwin Group, and Urban Girlz.

- Established and manage the Word of Mouth Series. The Word of Mouth series is an enlightening series about criminal law and the legal system. The goal of the series is to demystify the criminal justice system. The panel discussions have delved into the following topics: grand jury, how to obtain counsel if you cannot afford an attorney, the difference between appointed and retained counsel, search warrants, the function of the Dallas County Public Defender's Office, how to obtain records from the Clerk's Office, voting rights of individuals that have served penitentiary sentences, responsibilities of the District Attorney's Office, the bail bond process, and a guide to traffic stops.
- Collaborate with three colleagues to implement the Pipeline to Possibilities Program. The Pipeline to Possibilities Program is a six month program designed to mentor junior high and high school students and give them an understanding of the criminal justice system.

Dallas County District Attorney's Office, Dallas, Texas
Assistant District Attorney, August 2012 - December 2014

- Supervised misdemeanor prosecutors handling animal cruelty cases and prosecuted a felony animal cruelty caseload
- Handled all aspects of a Specialized Crime Division and Juvenile caseload

- Investigated and prosecuted a wide range of financial crimes including embezzlement, securing the execution of a document by deception, counterfeiting, and piracy cases
 - Conducted financial analysis of personal and corporate bank records
 - Conducted juvenile detention hearings and trials
 - Presented felony cases to the grand jury
 - Advised law enforcement as to criminal procedure issues
- Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office, Richmond, Texas
Assistant District Attorney, August 2009 - August 2012
- Handled all aspects of a juvenile caseload, from intake to disposition
 - Conducted weekly juvenile detention hearings
 - Advised law enforcement as to criminal procedure issues
 - Performed legal and factual research
 - Analyzed and interpreted statutes, case law, and factual data for litigation and motion practice
 - Drafted legal documents, including pleadings and motions
 - Interviewed and prepared law enforcement, victims, and witnesses for litigation
 - Reviewed felony cases presented by law enforcement agencies and determined whether criminal charges should be filed
 - Presented felony cases to the grand jury on a weekly basis
 - Assisted in the preparation of search and arrest warrant affidavits
 - Answered a hotline for Fort Bend County residents seeking advice on a wide variety of legal issues
 - Handled a misdemeanor caseload, from intake to trial
 - Handled a significant domestic violence misdemeanor caseload for two County Courts, from intake to trial
 - Managed a civil protective order caseload for two District Courts
 - Conducted hearings and trials in criminal cases, both misdemeanor and felony cases, as well as civil matters
 - Assisted with training of Women's Shelter volunteers and law enforcement

Nassau County District Attorney's Office, Hempstead, New York
Assistant District Attorney, District Court Trial Bureau, August 2006 - May 2008

- Handled all aspects of a significant misdemeanor caseload, from investigatory stage to trial
- Evaluated the strength of cases and determined whether additional charges should be filed
- Analyzed and applied statutes, case law, and factual data for use in preparation of cases and motion practice
- Interviewed and prepared police officers, victims, and witnesses for litigation
- Investigated and researched factual basis of cases to prepare for litigation
- Conducted hearings and trials

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

Since I took office on January 1, 2015, I have implemented two alternative justice programs, The Word of Mouth series and the Empowerment Program. The Word of Mouth series is an enlightening series about criminal law and the legal system. The goal of the series is to demystify the criminal justice system. The panel discussions have delved into the following topics: grand jury, how to obtain counsel if you cannot afford an attorney, the difference between appointed and retained counsel, search warrants, the function of the Dallas County Public Defender's Office, how to obtain records from the Clerk's Office, voting rights of individuals that have served penitentiary sentences, the bail bond process, etc.

The Empowerment Program is a ten month supplemental felony probation program that provides probationers with the necessary life skills and support needed to complete felony probation and 'pay it forward' to the community. The participants are paired with a mentor from the community to assist them. The program's curriculum includes components in these areas: life skills, educational advancement, career planning, and community involvement. The Empowerment Program partners with the following organizations to fulfill the curriculum: Aberg Center for Literacy, Jiffy Lube, Brebeautified Makeup, Cognosante, Comerica, Dallas County Clerk's Office, Dallas Life, Department of Public Safety, Goodwill Dallas, SMU, House of Renewed

Hope, LIFT Education, Mountain View College, Social Security Administration, P.C., Texas Women's University, Toastmasters International, and Urban Girlz.

In 2018, it became clear that there was interference, from outside agencies, in the capital murder and murder assignments in the Courts. An investigation was conducted by the Dallas County Staff Attorneys and they uncovered that in a particular instance an Executive Assistant District Attorney had admitted that they intervened in a murder assignment in the 282nd Judicial District Court because in sum and substance, "...Judge Givens cannot be manipulated." I believe one of the corner stones of our criminal justice system is the presumption of innocence and that individuals should be guaranteed a fair and impartial judiciary. I did not sit silent and when called upon by the Dallas County Commissioners to address the matter, I did. As a result, my Colleagues and I adopted a new capital murder and murder assignment process. The new process ensures that accused individuals' Constitutional rights to a fair and impartial judge are protected and that outside agencies cannot manipulate case assignments.

Most recently, in 2020 after witnessing the horrors unfold after George Floyd's murder, we observed Dallas County defense attorneys post on social media calling Black Americans "animals" and "subhuman." In response, I questioned how an attorney could protect someone's Constitutional Rights if they do not believe they are a person? The 6th and 14th Amendments to the Constitution provides that an accused individual has a fundamental right to counsel and if the person is indigent they are entitled to the appointment of counsel by the Court; however an individual is only entitled to counsel of their choice if they are able to afford to pay for counsel.

In response, I created the first anti-discrimination policy in the United States of America that addresses an individual's fundamental right to have counsel that believes ALL people are constitutionally entitled to a criminal defense. This policy is now in effect and has been included in Dallas County's Texas Indigent Defense Plan.

As evidenced by my work over the last seven years as your Presiding Judge of the 282nd Judicial District Court, when I am re-elected I will continue to address inequities and ensure that all people are guaranteed equal access in the criminal justice system and a fair and impartial judiciary.

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

I would showcase the endorsement on my website, campaign literature, social media and any campaign advertisements.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create a friendly environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

I have worked to ensure that everyone who accesses my court is treated fairly. To ensure that this continues across the Court system, I initiated the anti-discrimination policy that is now law in our courts. In addition, the Equal Employment Opportunity Act protects workers from discrimination and provides equal employment opportunities for everyone. As I continue to serve Dallas, I will remain steadfast in implementing and upholding those laws. I will continue to be very aggressive and ensure that my Court and staff reflect the implementation of those laws.

How would you handle a situation in which you or a subordinate felt the need to not fulfill all the lawful work duties due to “deeply held religious beliefs”?

I will comply with the current law. I don't believe it is right to use religion to harm another person. As a Presiding Judge, I work to ensure that all people have access to a fair and just process in my Court.

Understanding that administrative matters can take up a significant percentage of your work day, what are the most important policies or procedures you've identified as needing improvement

My personal life experience and observations have shaped my perspective regarding Court policies and procedures. From my current position as a Presiding Judge, former Assistant District Attorney, former Defense Attorney, and family member of an accused individual [ultimately incarcerated]...I believe it is

imperative that both the State and Defense be wholly committed to their respective roles. To ensure that focus is present, I foster communication between all parties and habitually review the status of cases. In addition to Court settings, my Court regularly communicates with both the State and Defense via email. The additional communication and oversight aids in overcoming discovery issues, ensuring that there are no outstanding bond issues, and the orderliness in trial and pre-trial matters, etc.

Do you have ideas to improve access to the courts and court-related services? Yes. If so, what are they?

I believe the accessibility of court processes to parties is a core value of equal justice. To improve access, my staff and I regularly review rules of practice and procedure and revise policies to reflect changes in law and to simplify and clarify procedures. The changes that my staff and I have implemented are purposed in helping reduce costs and delay in criminal case management, to address the growing role of electronic discovery, and to take widespread advantage of technology in Court proceedings.

Do you believe the composition of juries adequately and fairly reflects society at large? Why or why not? If not, what can we do to change this?

We have come a long way in Dallas County, Texas as it relates to getting a good cross-section of our community to participate in the jury process. We still have so much work to do. I believe education about the jury process is a major component, specifically the history of how it has played out in here in Dallas County and the nationwide impact. In Dallas County in the 60s, 70s, and mid 80s the Sparling Manual was utilized by the Dallas County District Attorney's Office. This manual gave instruction to Dallas County prosecutors on how to get rid of potential jurors that were people of color, educated women and people who practiced certain religious beliefs. Prior to the mid 80s, The United States Supreme Court had not addressed residents' right to be invited to participate in the jury process. Dallas County's use of the discriminatory Sparling Manual brought to the forefront the need for change in the United States and importance of diversity on jury panels. I regularly share this history with venire panelists during jury selection and their response is an overwhelming one of gratitude. In understanding Dallas County's history, they

undeniably express their shift in viewing jury service as an honor as opposed to a burden.

What is your general judicial philosophy?

It is critically important that we remain focused on ensuring that justice and equality for all is a reality. My Court works aggressively to ensure that the rights of the victims and those accused are simultaneously protected.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No, there is nothing in my past or background.

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

I am not a current member but I will pledge to join.

Teresa Jan Hawthorne

282nd Civil District Court

All Judicial Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

My dear Mother instilled in me from the beginning of time that all people should be treated equally and have all the same and equal rights. My brother is Gay he and I do share different political views as he is a Rep.

When I was on the bench I helped two young people who were just coming out as gay. I personally sought out counseling for them to help them deal with the so many ignorant people in our society. This counseling included among other issues help with family members. After all these years the 2 people still remain in contact with me. They now love themselves and are successfully living their lives.

www.judgeteresa.com

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

I affirm. Majority voting history is Democrat.

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

Please see my resume on my website: www.judgeteresa.com / Also the reasons I am running for this bench are listed in my Formal Announcement on the site and there is a short letter to all voters.

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

You will see some answers to this question below in other answers. The number one responsibility for this bench is to make sure that every individual involved with this court are treated with respect and dignity and impartiality. Also I will show respect to all party's time and purposed to be presented to me. I will be at work and will be the Public Servant that the community expects me to be. After all, this is not an election for Queen of the Court. Please read my formal announcement @www.judgeteresa.com

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

Absolutely I would include, as it would be an honor to receive your endorsement. Everything I post, pass out; etc would show your endorsement.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create a friendly environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

My past speaks for itself. All are respected and treated with dignity. Court personnel will follow. my lead.

How would you handle a situation in which you or a subordinate felt the need to not fulfill all the lawful work duties due to "deeply held religious beliefs"?

My personal religious beliefs include for me to handle all the lawful work duties I will be sworn to do. My #1 requirement for all who work in the court where I hopefully will preside is: "We are courteous at all times to any person who enters the court for any reason" This is etched in stone.

Understanding that administrative matters can take up a significant percentage of your work day, what are the most important policies or procedures you've identified as needing improvement

There will be efficiency in all areas so that no one's time is wasted. The time for Probation interviews/paperwork needs to be sped up. No one who is offered probation is going to sit in jail and wait on paperwork. Instead of jail time as a condition to continue one

on probation, I will offer the D. a choice to sign in with the court for a certain number of days before going to work instead of time in jail. (I have done this and it works) Jobs are the first thing that helps with rehabilitation. I will give time served on court costs and fines as I did in the past; most of these folks are indigent and need to be able to feed themselves and their families.

Do you have ideas to improve access to the courts and court-related services? Yes. If so, what are they?

I am not sure to what you are referring by access to the courts, Court related services are not managed by the Judges. However if any one ask me to help or comes to me with questions, I will always do whatever I need to do to get their questions immediately answered.

Do you believe the composition of juries adequately and fairly reflects society at large? Why or why not? If not, what can we do to change this?

To a satisfactory or acceptable extent? Yes I suggest studies need to be made and results carefully scrutinized. If you have any suggestions please talk to your legislator our DA or even let your concerns always be known to the Judges.

What is your general judicial philosophy?

My general judicial philosophy is to judge as a referee; follow the law; listen intently to both sides of the bar and always remember that there is no Justice without Grace.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

Maybe my 2 Public Judicial Reprimands. I will send my explanations to your president, so anyone who wants to read can. I will always be honest and transparent to the public. If you want to discuss with me personally, I will make myself available.

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

I think since 2009. At times my membership may have expired for late payment.

2022 Dallas County Candidate Questionnaire

John Creuzot

Dallas County District Attorney

All Dallas County Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

I am deeply committed to fair treatment for members of the LGBTQ+ community. To help understand the needs of this community and stay abreast of issues, I appointed Phillip Clark to serve as liaison. Before COVID I participated in a number of town halls dealing with criminal justice as it impacts the LGBTQ+ community, and I intend to continue such activity. Our office has also successfully prosecuted cases that involved targeted assaults on members of the LGBTQ+ community. I have spent my career, as a judge and as an attorney, and as your District Attorney, working to implement reforms that take into account the ways that minority communities can be marginalized or disproportionately impacted by the criminal justice system. My goal is to make our system stronger and more equitable by recognizing what is working and what is not working, and by coming up with policy solutions that are subjected to independent review to make sure we are improving outcomes.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

Yes

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

DECADES OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE EXPERIENCE

Dallas County District Attorney John Creuzot is a nationally-recognized leader in criminal law and criminal justice reform, with more than 30 years of experience. Creuzot was elected District Attorney in 2018 and is seeking his second term. Before his service as the District Attorney, Creuzot served as a Texas Criminal District Court Judge for 21 years, and also as an attorney in private practice. At the beginning of his career, Creuzot served for seven years as a Dallas County Assistant District Attorney and Chief Felony Prosecutor.

INNOVATION AND NATIONAL REPUTATION

District Attorney John Creuzot has earned a national reputation for his innovative work on drug courts, criminal justice reform and evidence-based sentencing. He has regularly appeared in the news and on television as an expert on criminal justice topics. Creuzot has lectured and taught courses at the National Drug Court Institute, the National Judicial College, and the National Center for State Courts. He has also presented at several national training conferences for the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, and has taught drug court teams from across the country. Creuzot has lectured and directed seminars for the Texas Center for the Judiciary, the Texas Bar Association, and the National Association of Drug Court Professionals. Creuzot is known for his evidence-based methodology of testing criminal justice policy, evaluating results, and enacting the most successful innovations. His goal is protecting the community from the most dangerous criminals while instituting reforms that make the system fairer, save taxpayer dollars, help individuals escape the cycle of crime, and have overall public safety benefits for the community.

DIVERT, RE-ENTRY, DNA EVIDENCE AND PIONEERING CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM IN DALLAS COUNTY

In 1998, John Creuzot established Dallas County's first-ever specialty court for drug offenses, known as DIVERT (Dallas Initiative for Expedited Recovery and Treatment), which allows selected first-time drug offenders to go through intensive, court-monitored rehabilitation instead of facing incarceration. This

program was the result of probing questions Creuzot began to ask about the outcomes for people and the community resulting from the criminal justice system at the time.

Creuzot subjected his DIVERT program to two different third-party academic studies conducted by Southern Methodist University. The study by the SMU Psychology Department showed that the DIVERT program achieved a 68% reduction in recidivism. The cost-benefit study by the SMU Economics Department showed that DIVERT saved taxpayers \$9 in criminal justice costs for every \$1 spent on participants in the program.

Just as important, the DIVERT program has had a dramatic impact on its graduates, helping people on the brink of self-destruction turn their lives around and become thriving, productive members of society. The legacy of Creuzot's pioneering work is the expansive growth of diversion courts in Dallas County and beyond.

Seeking to extend the success of court rehabilitation programs, Creuzot established the Substance Abuse Felony Punishment Facility Re-Entry Court in 2001, a program dedicated to helping formerly-incarcerated individuals adjust to normal life and work. Creuzot was also on the cutting edge as Dallas County began revisiting cases with new DNA evidence, leading to the exonerations of dozens of people. Creuzot worked closely with The Innocence Project, and he personally presided over the exonerations of numerous persons who had been falsely convicted.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

After his retirement from the judiciary, Dallas County honored John Creuzot by renaming its drug treatment facility the Judge John C. Creuzot Judicial Treatment Center in May of 2013. The center provides an intensive residential program as an alternative to incarceration for Dallas County probationers. The facility is coordinated with the Dallas Community Supervision and Corrections Department and the Dallas County Courts. The center works to ensure successful substance abuse treatment and reintegration into the community. It also offers education and skills training and job search assistance to probationers, and

education and counseling for family members.

SELECT AWARDS

- Mental Health Association of Greater Dallas Prism Award
- National Association of Drug Court Professionals Drug Court Pioneer
- National Association of Drug Court Professionals Drug Court Hall of Fame
- University of North Texas President's Award and Outstanding Alumni Award
- J.L. Turner Legal Association Outstanding Jurist Award
- Mothers Against Teen Violence Community Service Award
- Dallas Observer Best Criminal Judge Award
- Rev. Zan Holmes Leadership Award
- Southern Methodist University School of Law Outstanding Alumni Award
- Dallas Bar Association M.L. King Jr. Justice Award
- Texas Bar Criminal Justice Section Outstanding Jurist
- Texas Bar Criminal Justice Section Judge of the Year
- Dallas County Democratic Party Legacy Award
- Best Criminal Defense Lawyers in Dallas Peer Recognition
- D Magazine Best Criminal Defense Attorney Recognition

SELECT BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

- U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs Science Advisory Board, appointed by Attorney General Loretta Lynch
- Texas Punishment Standards Commission, which rewrote the Sentencing Provisions of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure

- Judicial Advisory Council to the Texas Board of Criminal Justice
- Texas Bar District Six Grievance Committee
- City of Dallas Ethics Task Force, appointed by Mayor Ron Kirk, which rewrote the Rules of Ethics for Officials for the City of Dallas
- City of Dallas Task Force on Homelessness, including spearheading The Bridge homeless shelter
- Dallas Urban League Block Grant Board
- Unlocking DOORS, Inc. Board and Chair
- Promising Youth Alliance Board
- Phoenix House of Texas Board

EDUCATION AND PERSONAL BACKGROUND

John Creuzot was born in New Orleans and spent his youth in Houston before coming to the Dallas area in the 1970s and graduating from the University of North Texas in 1978 and Southern Methodist University School of Law in 1982.

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

I am now entering my fourth year of service as Dallas County District Attorney. I am proud of what we have achieved so far to make good on the promises of my 2018 campaign. We have pushed for progress on every front to achieve needed criminal justice reform. On many issues, we are seeing results, notably on decriminalizing mental health and homelessness, and implementing commonsense approaches to low-level offenses. We are no longer prosecuting first-time offenders in misdemeanor marijuana cases, thereby eliminating the racial disparity in arrests and prosecution.

There is still much to do. We are still working to show the community and other stakeholders the value of new ways. This is natural. Change always comes in fits and starts, and it takes

time to demonstrate progress and earn broader acceptance. The experience I have had as a change agent in the District Attorney's Office is not much different than at any other time I have tried to initiate innovations and reforms. We will get there together as a community.

In my time in public service, I have held the hands of crime victims and I have shepherded those in need of help. I have prosecuted the most complex and heinous crimes. I have given hope to the hopeless and, instead of giving up on their lives, I have been a catalyst in saving them. Sons, daughters, nieces, nephews, uncles, aunts and moms, dads and grandparents have avoided jails and prisons because I cared for them. I have seen lives reclaimed, lives saved, and families reunited. When we help others and create smart criminal justice policy, I know we are making the community better and safer. We can do these things and still keep us all safe from violent and serious crime.

My goals as Dallas County District Attorney remain:

Always leading by example.

Training and motivating a new generation of prosecutors who distinguish violent criminals from non-violent criminals.

Communicating with and engaging all sectors of the Dallas County community in establishing goals and values for the Dallas County District Attorney's Office.

Encouraging bail reform to reduce jail costs.

Continuously improving and establishing innovative diversion programs that save lives and money.

Expanding and improving access to mental health services to reduce crime and keep the community safe.

Improving and expanding conviction integrity.

Expanding efforts to release innocent individuals from prison.

Engaging our community in a discussion of commonsense approaches to low-level offenses.

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

I would proudly promote my endorsement by your organization.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create an inclusive environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

We have LGBTQ+ staff members, we have a liaison to the community, and we are always looking for ways to expand the diversity and excellence of our staff.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

We have appointed Phillip Clark to this position.

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

Yes we have such a policy.

How would you handle a situation in which you or a subordinate felt the need to not fulfill all the lawful work duties due to “deeply held religious beliefs”?

Everyone at the District Attorney’s office is an at-will employee, and all take an oath to uphold the law. We demand and expect everyone to follow that oath.

County Commissioner Candidates

In light of decreased federal and state funding, how would you lead or support funding for HIV prevention in Dallas County including access to PrEP?

Although this is out of my purview, I support enhancing health care access.

What would you do to support and assist the many people with mental illness who must rely on the public system for care in or out of incarceration?

We have established the DALLAS DEFLECTS program in order to get people who are mentally ill and unhoused wrap-around treatment, rather than incarcerating them. This is smart policy because it is humane, because it gets people the real help they need, because it frees up public safety resource to focus on real crime, and because it reduced our jail population and saves taxpayer dollars.

How would you address the issues of non-Dallas County Residents using Parkland?

This is outside the purview of my office.

How would you rate the County's Response to COVID?

I believe that Dallas County has attempted to do an outstanding job, led by science and the advice of medical experts. I believe that these efforts have been undermined, because of politics, by state leaders limiting our local control over how to handle the pandemic.

In your opinion, what needed to happen in the past redistricting cycle?

Texas needs an independent redistricting commission, so that we get rid of gerrymandering and those in power blatantly draw lines that nearly guarantee the maintenance of that power, rather than providing an opportunity to voters to elect representative leaders.

How can the county play a part in expanding voting rights and access, including voting centers and extended hours?

I believe the County Elections Administrator ought to have license to do what is necessary here in a large urban county, to make voting access as easy as possible. That could mean a longer early voting schedule, with more hours. It could mean more locations. It could also mean expanding access to voting by mail. Once again, Republicans at the state level have passed new laws to curtail the authority of local administrators, including criminalizing the act of encouraging voting by mail, etc.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

I have been a member in the past. If my membership has lapsed, I am happy to join again.

2022 Dallas County Candidate Questionnaire

Elizabeth Davis Frizell

Dallas County District Attorney

All Dallas County Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

There have been several members of the LGBTQ+ community who have been victims of violent crimes in Dallas County. Many of the cases have not been prosecuted by the District Attorney's Office, specifically in the transgender community. The District Attorney's office should focus on pursuing cases with transgender victims to ensure everyone in the LGBTQ+ community is safe.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

Yes. Democrat.

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

Burt Barr & Associates LLP - Co-Counsel, The Frizell Firm, Criminal District Court Judge, County Criminal Court Judge, Municipal Court Judge, United States Department of Justice

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

Bail bond reform, establishing Dallas County's first felony domestic violence court, Have special prosecutors investigate police shootings

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of

Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

Yes. I would showcase Stonewall's endorsement on my campaign website, literature, mailers, campaign advertisements and social media

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create an inclusive environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

I'll advertise employment opportunities and internships in the the LGBTQ+ community newsletters and website to recruit members of the LGBTQ+ community to work in the court system

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

Yes. A liaison can keep the LGBTQ+ community updated on the policies and programs implemented within the District Attorney's Office.

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

Yes.

How would you handle a situation in which you or a subordinate felt the need to not fulfill all the lawful work duties due to "deeply held religious beliefs"?

All employees must provide the same service and work responsibilities for all defendants, victims and co-workers in order to continue employment with the District Attorney's Office and I will adhere to the same standard.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

10 years

2022 Dallas County Candidate Questionnaire

Margaret O'Brien

Justice of the Peace 2-1

All Dallas County Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

I conduct same sex marriages and support the rights of all individuals that want to be married. I have had several phone conversations where the individuals want to make sure I know it is a same sex ceremony and will I conduct it. I feel for those individuals that even have to ask that question because it is their right to be married. I put them at ease and let them know I marry everyone and I am happy to conduct their ceremony.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

I affirm. Democratic

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

I was elected to this position in 2018. I have worked very hard over the last 3 years to increase the productivity of my court. I have one of the highest case disposal rates, approximately third highest of the ten courts of the Dallas County Justice of the Peace Courts. I disposed of over 10,000 cases during the pandemic and even with the closures and delays I continue to work hard serving my constituents. I support the needs of the community and am

one of the courts that is always available for mental warrants. During the pandemic, mental health issues have increased and I have noted that this year through the increased community need for mental warrants. I also have been chosen to be on the faculty of the Texas Justice Court Training Center which trains all the justice court judges in the Texas. My educational background is as follows: BS in Chemistry (SFASU), Masters in Environmental Health (UTHSC Houston), and a Masters Certificate from SMU in Dispute Resolution. I also have been a small business owner since 2004, holding a real estate broker's license in the state of Texas.

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

I will continue to focusing on building the staff that can effectively work through our high volume of case filings and serve the constituents with a pleasant demeanor. In addition, I will keep working hard to dispose of cases in a timely manner regardless of the obstacles with our filing systems.

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

I would include the Stonewall Democrats endorsement on my campaign media. I was endorsed last election cycle and I included your endorsement on all my campaign media. The endorsement meant so much to me because of the diverse membership who votes on candidates.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create an inclusive environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

My staffing goal is always to be inclusive of every employee, their needs, and treat everyone with respect.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

If it there was a need for this, I would certainly do what was needed.

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

Yes of course.

How would you handle a situation in which you or a subordinate felt the need to not fulfill all the lawful work duties due to “deeply held religious beliefs”?

You have to perform the duties of your job without any kind of discrimination. If I was not able to perform the required job duties I would resign and if an employee could not perform job duties they would need to find other employment.

Justice of the Peace Candidates

As many people faced evictions during the COVID pandemic, how would you or did you ensure that the process is fair and compassionate for people facing it?

My court included all the required information about rental assistance per the Texas Supreme Court as well as our standard resources sheet for various types of assistance (legal aid, financial assistance contacts) with every citation served. We also had Dallas County Health and Human Services representative present for eviction court to cover their program details and assist defendants if needed. I always start court with an introduction of the process that hopefully puts them at ease and lets them know their story will be heard. I encourage all parties to seek legal advice to see what their other legal remedies may be if needed. I also let them know the eviction process is not pleasant for anyone involved, myself included, but I must proceed with the information presented as well as applying the law.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

I am not aware of anything.

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

I am now a current member as of this week. :)

2022 Dallas County Candidate Questionnaire

Christina Sowell

Justice of the Peace 2-1

All Dallas County Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

I have family and friends that are members of the LGBTQ+ community so I do have a certain level of understanding their struggle. I position I seek has the authority to marry same sex couples, which some refuse to do. Has a licensed officiant (without this sought after position) I've had the pleasure and honor of marrying a same sex couple and would not use my position to discriminate against any member of the LGBTQ+ community.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

Yes, I am a democrat with a democratic voting history.

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

I am seeking the office of Justice of the Peace, 2-1, and while there are no specific qualifications needed for this role, I believe that my experience in the legal field for the past 18 years will enhance my ability to serve the community in this role.

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

I plan to be accessible to the public/community, provide fair and unbiased rulings based on the law, and provide resources to assist

the community from rental assistance to legal aid, to mental health, to education resources.

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

I would showcase the endorsement on all of my social media sites as well as including it in campaign literature.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create an inclusive environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

N/A the position of Justice of the Peace is as an employee of Dallas County. The County will make all hiring decisions. I, however, will be inclusive of any member of the LGBTQ+ community that is selected to work with me.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

Yes.

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

N/A the position of Justice of the Peace is as an employee of Dallas County. The County makes those policy's. I, however, will encourage an environment of non-discrimination of all people regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, etc..

How would you handle a situation in which you or a subordinate felt the need to not fulfill all the lawful work duties due to "deeply held religious beliefs"?

I would speak with the subordinate regarding their role, job description, responsibilities, etc., in their particular position and if they are unable to fulfill those duties due to religious belief's I'd refer them to HR for further instruction.

Justice of the Peace Candidates

As many people faced evictions during the COVID pandemic, how would you or did you ensure that the process is fair and compassionate for

people facing it?

I would hear each case openly and objectively. I would offer solutions and/or resources to assist the individual in whatever their need may be.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No.

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

Officially (paid member), a few weeks. Unofficially, I've been affiliate with the Stonewall Democrats of Dallas for a year or two.

2022 Dallas County Candidate Questionnaire

Atalia Garcia Williams

Justice of the Peace 2-1

All Dallas County Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

While my interest in the LGBTQ+ community's needs derived from having close friends and family members that identify as such, my understanding of the needs of the LGBTQ+ community stems from supporting and advocating for their legal rights. As an attorney, I actively work with LGBTQ+ clients. I achieved a deeper understanding of the community's discrimination, harassment, and even violence in my day-to-day work. I have helped LGBTQ+ clients in immigration cases, divorces, and criminal defense matters. One experience that comes to mind was in 2013, Section 3 of the Defense of Marriage Act was struck down as unconstitutional by the US Supreme Court; at that time, my good friend approached me about helping him with a same-sex immigration case.

I learned that his partner of 10 years was undocumented, and the recent change in laws would finally allow my friend to marry his partner and help him petition for his immigration visa. He booked a flight and married in New York City in early 2014. I proceeded to help him file an immigration petition for his husband. I had experience working with families in immigration cases, but I had never handled an immigration case for a member of the LGBTQ+ community. I was honored that my friend trusted me with his case. After filing his immigration petition, the day came for their immigration interview. While I felt I was well-versed in the interview's procedural format, nothing would have prepared me for what came next. Not only were they treated differently than

any other marriage interview I had ever handled, but I was as well. The immigration officer asked my clients extremely personal information that generally would not be asked in a routine immigration interview unless the officer questioned the couple's legitimacy. As their attorney, the immigration officer questioned how much they paid me to handle the matter and why I would take it. I had never experienced these types of questions before in my time as an attorney. The officer was rude and condescending; I redirected and objected to the immigration officer's line of questioning towards my clients and myself. Ultimately, the Immigration Officer approved them after I showed him there was no reason to subject a couple with over ten years of romantic history and tangible proof of their relationship to an hour-long interview of intimate questions.

My friends were excited about the approval of their case that day. I left USCIS offices with a desire to continue learning more about advocating for people of the LGBTQ+ community. Since that interview, I have learned how to prepare my clients to overcome the hurdles of a bonafide marriage interview. I have been able to successfully help many gay, lesbian, transgender, queer, and bisexual+ individuals achieve permanent residency status. Attorneys and Judges need to take the time to learn and understand the legal needs of the LGBTQ+ community because everyone deserves advocacy. My law firm has been listed on Pride214.com for many years as LGBTQ+ friendly. We take pride in our support of LGBTQ+ causes.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

Yes, I am a Democrat and have voted in the Democratic Primary.

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

My qualifications and experience that are pertinent to the office I am seeking include:

My Educational Background-

BBA in Management, Minor in Marketing- 2006

Juris Doctor- 2009

MBA- 2014

My experience as an Attorney, Mediator, Realtor, and Small Business Owner:

I have been a licensed attorney for almost 12 years. I have been self-employed since 2010. I am currently admitted into practice in the State of Texas, United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas, United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas, United States Tax Court, and the United States Supreme Court. I am knowledgeable of court procedures and systems and have appeared for cases from the Justice level to the Federal level. I have become well-versed in many different areas of law, primarily because I want to help the everyday person. My law firm has helped many clients from within the community. Through the years, I have learned and practiced landlord/tenant law, real estate law, civil law, estates, probate law, family law, criminal law, immigration law, bankruptcy law. I have worked as counsel for general contractors and small business owners during contract negotiations and breach of contract cases. I am familiar with construction law because I worked alongside my father in his small construction business for many years. I sat for the State of Virginia Builders licensing exam and successfully passed it by demonstrating knowledge of fieldwork, legal, and technical experience.

I obtained my MBA in 2014 to expand my knowledge of business ownership and operation. As a small business owner, I have experience in budgeting, cost-benefit analyses, personnel, and day-to-day office management. I have directly worked with different charities and community organizations to sponsor community events and programs as a business owner.

Additionally, I have been a licensed real estate agent since 2010. I combined my knowledge as a Realtor and Attorney to help people with Owner Finance Real Estate Document Drafting Services. I prepare the documents to ensure both buyer and seller are legally compliant and protected when they cannot

afford a title company. I am also a Mediator; I obtained my Mediation Training from Dr. Nancy K. Ferrell, Mediation Trainor, in 2018. Since then, I have about 100 hours of Mediation Training and have helped clients with family law and real estate dispute mediations.

I have real-world life experience as a person, a business owner, and a professional. I understand the court system. I know and can interpret the law. I will use this experience when making legal and equitable decisions if elected for this office.

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

There must be equal access to the system. I will provide nonstandard times by adding the availability of court during the times people are available such as evenings. I will implement language translation services, interpretation, and mediation availability. I will create digital access and inclusion for everyone in the courtroom.

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

If endorsed by Stonewall Democrats, I would add the Stonewall Democrats endorsement to my website, direct mail campaign, literature and all campaign social media pages. I would be proud to be endorsed by this organization. A press release would be in order.

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create an inclusive environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

If elected Justice of the Peace, I will have a direct input in the hiring of court staff. All qualified applicants regardless of gender or sexual orientation will have equal footing with regards to hiring and retention. I will inform any LGTBQ+ organizations of job postings in my court. I also promise to aggressively enforce anti-discrimination laws, especially where it applies to the LGBTQ+ community. Second, my staff will have frequent training to recognize and address any LGBTQ biases that may exist. I will implement the use of non-gender terms with my staff.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

Yes, I will appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ+ community on an ongoing basis.

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

Yes, I will have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ+ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity.

How would you handle a situation in which you or a subordinate felt the need to not fulfill all the lawful work duties due to “deeply held religious beliefs”?

If elected, as part of my hiring process, I would address this issue with all potential applicants seeking employment on my staff. I believe that court staff are in place to serve the citizens of the community. As such, our personal or religious beliefs should not interfere with our ability to fulfill our commitment to all citizens. Court staff are not self governing and cannot make decisions based on deeply held religious beliefs. If a person was not able to fulfill their lawful duties because of deeply held religious beliefs, then they would be let go.

Justice of the Peace Candidates

As many people faced evictions during the COVID pandemic, how would you or did you ensure that the process is fair and compassionate for people facing it?

During the pandemic, as a federal eviction moratorium was enacted by the Federal Government, but I am aware that there were judges in Dallas County signing eviction orders in violation of this law. During this time, numerous landlords came to my law office with the idea of hiring us to evict tenants who were not paying rent. I directed my staff to inform them that we were not taking those kinds of cases and we would direct them to local and federal resources that was available to them during this time of need. Although I can empathize with the landlords

who were losing out on their rental income, I understand that it wasn't right to evict someone during a pandemic where millions of people lost jobs or were unable to work. If I would have been the Justice of the Peace at the time, I would have ensured that I would have extended the local eviction moratorium as long as I legally could. I would have also pointed landlords and tenants to the Rental Relief agencies and mediation services to prevent the eviction process.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

No.

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

I am a member since December 09, 2021.

2022 Dallas County Candidate Questionnaire

Henry Brown

Justice of the Peace 2-1

All Dallas County Candidates

Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

LGBTQ+ needs more recognition. I have always supported my friends and family, especially during PRIDE month. Also As the President of the NAACP I speak up for ALL that may have been mistreated.

As an organization affiliated with the Texas Democratic Party, Stonewall Democrats of Dallas will only endorse candidates who affirm an affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. Do you make such an affirmation? What is your previous voting history?

Yes I do. I have a very strong democratic voting history for 30+ years

Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:

- Associates in General Studies - Liberty University- 2011
- BS in Business Administration/Minor Psychology - Liberty University - 2013
- Certificate of Pastoral Care - Howard Thurman School of Theology
- Certification of Conflict Resolution
- Certification of Effective Communication
- 4B Board Member

- Mesquite Park Master Plan Advisory Board Member
- Keep Mesquite Beautiful Board Member
- Crime Watch President
- Mesquite Police Chief Search Panelist
- Black Business Symposium Of Mesquite Founder
- Mesquite MLK Annual Parade & Commemoration Organizer
- Former Chief Advisor of Minority Affairs and Equity for Former Mesquite

Mayor Bruce Archer

- Co-founder of the Mesquite Behavioral Health Scholarship for MISD Students
- Founder of the Annual Mesquite 50 Job Summer Job Challenge

Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?

I'll work to address the immediate needs of working families through progressive community programs while providing greater accessibility to the court and its resources.

- Create a rental assistance hotline for families
- Partner with nonprofits to reduce truancy and assist struggling young adults
- Develop a publicly available legal library
- Establish a monthly pro bono legal clinic with attorney partners
- Offer night and weekend court availability
- Partner with local law enforcement to develop a drivers license reinstatement program

How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?

Yes. Social Media, Website and on printed literature

When elected, how will you recruit, retain, and create an inclusive environment for LGBTQ and LGBTQ-friendly staff?

I will not discriminate against anyone. I will base my decision solely on their qualifications. I will ensure that all staff has receive the proper diversity training so that all employees are treated equally and fairly.

Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?

Yes of course. I feel it is important that everyone feels comfortable speaking with someone that may understand them better based on their background whether sexuality, race, etc.

Will you have a non-discrimination policy for employment and protection of LGBTQ residents and protection based on sexual orientation or gender identity? If not, why?

Yes. This is very important to have in any workplace. Again, it is extremely important that no on is treated less than the other. We are all God's children.

How would you handle a situation in which you or a subordinate felt the need to not fulfill all the lawful work duties due to "deeply held religious beliefs"?

I will follow all state and county laws. In my court, no one will be above the law regardless of their religious beliefs..

Justice of the Peace Candidates

As many people faced evictions during the COVID pandemic, how would you or did you ensure that the process is fair and compassionate for people facing it?

I will first look at the case. I will make my decision based on the facts while also having compassion for those that may be in this situation. I recognize no case is alike.

All Candidates

Is there anything in your past or background that has not been covered by the previous questions that might - without careful explanation - cause our organization to reconsider or withdraw our endorsement of you?

n/a

How long have you been a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas? If you are not a member, will you pledge to join before the endorsement screenings? If no, why not?

n/a