



# 2022 Stonewall Questionnaire

All candidates seeking an endorsement from Bay State Stonewall Democrats must **make a copy** of this google doc and complete the questionnaire below.

Endorsements are considered and voted on by the Endorsement Committee and then the Executive Board on a rolling basis. The level of financial support is determined on a case-by-case basis for each endorsed candidate. Please complete and return this questionnaire by uploading to this [google form](#) by Friday, May 13th, at 5PM. The endorsement committee will schedule a time to meet with candidates.

Please note that unless otherwise indicated as confidential, your answers are "on the record", they will be posted on our BSSD website prior to the convention, circulated to all members of the Board, and will be shared outside the organization.

## Candidate and Campaign Information

Who do you consider to be your key constituencies, and how do you plan to mobilize them?

Frequent voters and newly registered voters; knocking on doors, direct mail, and digital with a message of my strong progressive values and accomplishments.

The MIT Living Wage Calculator defines a living wage for a single adult without children to be \$17.74 per hour. Do you plan to pay all full-time staff at least \$18 per hour?

Yes.

## General Information

## **Biographical Information**

### 1. Previous Elected Offices Held

- Brookline Town Meeting Member 2007 – present
- Brookline Constable 2010 – 2019 (didn't run for another 3-year term once elected to the legislature)
- State Representative, 15<sup>th</sup> Norfolk, 2018 – present
- Brookline Democratic Town Committee 2008 – present

### 2. Are you a member of Bay State Stonewall Democrats or its Board of Directors?

**No**, but I am a friend of BSSD, and am supported by Councilor Holly Ryan and Bryan Barash!

### 3. Have you been endorsed by any LGBTQ+ organizations now or in the past? If so, which ones and when?

**Yes**, BSSD 2018 and 2020.

## **Record of Support of LGBTQ+ Organizations**

Please let us know if you have ever volunteered with or supported any LGBTQ+ organizations. Feel free to include events in which you participated. Please include all groups you feel are pertinent including LGBTQ+ Equity actions or advocacy that you have taken in other non-LGBTQ+ organizations or Boards. If no previous volunteer or advocacy experience within or for LGBTQ+ Community, please explain.

I participated in Gay/Straight alliance events in high school (Kent School 1992—1996) and college (NC State 1996—2000), with the LGBT society (Dublin City University 2000—2001), and at Boston University (2002—2010). I've since participated in Boston's Pride Parades, typically marching with Congressman Kennedy or Senator Warren.

I also actively supported Yes on 3, both at political rallies and doing field work in Brookline.

## **Positions**

Please articulate and be specific, about your views on ALL the issues below whether you have or, if elected, would have the ability to vote on the issues. For those who have held office on any level previously or currently, on each item please note if you have a record on the issue such as having introduced, co-sponsored, co-patroned, signed into law, or voted for legislation or local statutes in the past. If you have held offices or significant positions, in any organizations or supervisory positions in your employment, please articulate any actions you have taken to make your organization/workplace a safer, more equitable environment for members of the LGBTQ+ Community. Please be specific in your answers. If not, whether there are policy reasons you have not done so.

### **Discrimination Protection**

#### **Non-Discrimination Policies**

Tell us about any written non-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation and gender identity that you have or will establish for staff or employees of your campaign or office? If you don't have such policies or plans for such policies, please tell us why.

My campaign and my State House office both take employment discrimination laws very seriously, both for paid and volunteer positions. Those protections include Massachusetts protected classes of sexual orientation and gender identity.

#### **Efforts to Ban Discrimination**

How would you support efforts to ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in employment and housing? Please feel free to discuss any pertinent existing local, state, and federal laws and any changes you perceive as necessary.

I support all efforts to ban discrimination on the bases of sexual orientation and gender identity in employment and housing, *including* health insurance

coverage associated with employment – such as coverage for PrEP and gender affirmation surgeries and treatments.

## **Religious Freedom**

Please comment on your opinion of "Religious Freedom Bills." Please state if you see any reasons to support bills of this type.

Religion cannot justify discriminating against a protected class. This applies to everything from baking cakes to adoption services.

## **Marriage and Partnership**

### **Support for Marriage Equality**

Republicans appear to be signaling their intention to attack the Supreme Court Decision in Obergefell, tell us how you will protect and defend marriage equality

Please be specific. How do you plan on being an advocate in the future? If you have not supported marriage equality in the past, please explain.

At the state level, I will follow the lead of equality advocacy organizations such as BSSD and colleagues like Reps Lewis and Higgins in ensuring that our laws (and, if necessary, Constitution) are rock-solid against attacks on same-sex marriage or other LGBTQ rights. At the federal level, I will add my voice to the millions who demand equality for marriage and so many other legal rights and protections, including ensuring that marriage rights always transfer across state lines.

## **Education and Schools**

### **Family Life Education**

Do you support sex-ed programs, like the Healthy Youth Act that will include information specifically targeted to LGBTQ+ students? Have you advocated for such programs in the past? Be specific. If you have not, why not?

I'm a proud and vocal co-sponsor.

Increasingly Republicans are targeting learning environments to remove LGBTQ+ affirming materials. This includes banning books, protesting Drag Queen Story Hours, removing posters, and targeting after-school clubs and diversity and inclusion efforts for educators. How will you combat these efforts?

At the local level (Brookline), these attacks seem unlikely, but if they manifest I will join my community in being vigilant and raising objections quickly and clearly. At the state level, I will fight against that nonsense shoulder to shoulder with my colleagues, using bully pulpit and, if appropriate, our lawmaking authority.

### **Bullying and Harassment**

Discuss your feelings about the bullying and harassment of students because of their real or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity. In your answer please discuss ways in which you have or will: promote safer environments in schools, and advocate for initiatives to keep LGBTQ+ students safe

In the K-8 schools in Brookline, things feel quite good; there are several non-binary middle school students and use of preferred pronouns is rather well understood and adhered to. Brookline High School is a bit more complex; while the community is overwhelmingly welcoming and accepting, you're bound to find some awful behavior among 2,500 teenage students, including racism, antisemitism, and homo- and transphobia. When incidents occur, the community is quick to spotlight them and take public, clear action.

At the state level, we ought to provide students the same kinds of anti-discrimination we provide employees, provide resources for schools to create healthy, welcoming environments, and hold school districts and perhaps individuals accountable when they fail to do so.

Will you oppose efforts by school faculty, staff or administrators to out LGBTQ+ students to their families? If so, how?

Yes. I don't know how. Perhaps there's a privacy expectation, similar to medical privacy. I'm eager to learn more about how to protect the privacy of students.

### **Policies Impacting Transgender Students**

7. Discuss the adoption of policies in schools (elementary through college) that respect student gender identification, including consideration of reasonable and respectful accommodation in regard to facilities?

First and foremost, the culture and atmosphere must be one of acceptance. The details – bathrooms, changing rooms, gender-specific gym classes, sports, etc. can never be made right if the culture isn't accepting. With that culture, schools will mostly get it right and course-correct when necessary. New schools get single-toilet bathrooms; old schools perhaps give certain students access to faculty bathrooms, that sort of thing.

My community includes tampons and pads in public buildings restrooms – all school restrooms – because we expect people to use the bathroom with which they are most comfortable.

8. Please provide your feelings regarding legislation aimed at transgender athletes that have been proposed around the country.

It feels an awful lot like pejorative politics to me – vilifying the “other” to score points or distract Republican-leaning-voters from other issues.

### **HIV/AIDS Prevention, Testing, and Treatment**

#### **Access to PrEP for Minors without Adult Consent**

Do you support efforts to allow minors to receive prescriptions for Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) from health care providers as well as treatment for HIV without parental consent? Why or why not?

Yes, and am a proud co-sponsor of Rep Lewis' PrEP bill (and amendments).

## **Public Funding of HIV Prevention/Testing/Treatment**

Tell us how you have in the past or would in the future support public funding for HIV/AIDS prevention, testing, and treatment facilities. Be specific.

I have been eager to support budget amendments and bills that direct funding. HIV/AIDS prevention and testing should be prevalent and free, and treatment facilities should be available across the Commonwealth, also free. I support any and all incremental progress to that end. We showed a willingness to put public health above health care finance with COVID; let's apply that theory to other pandemics, including HIV/AIDS.

## **Free HIV/AIDS Testing at Jails and Prisons**

What is your opinion of free access to HIV/AIDS testing at jails and prison facilities, and the programs that support and encourage inmates to get tested for HIV/AIDS? Have you advocated for this?

I have been eager to support budget amendments and bills that direct funding, ***including for people currently incarcerated***. HIV/AIDS prevention and testing should be prevalent and free, and treatment facilities should be available across the Commonwealth, also free. I support any and all incremental progress to that end.

## **Choice and Contraception**

### **Reproductive Freedom**

Do you support an individual's right to control their own bodies, including all contraception and abortion?

Yes.

## Other

### **Commitment to Support Full Equality**

Discuss how you have shown commitment in the past and how you can commit to supporting full equality now and in the future. How important is this stance in your future leadership plans in elected office? Include instances of your prior commitment. If none, explain your growth process if you are now committed to full equality for the LGBTQ+ Community.

It's such an obvious fundamental outcome that I'm not sure how to approach the question. *Of course*, 100 percent, in all cases, unambiguously.

### **Advocacy for and Inclusion of LGBTQ+ Community**

How have you advocated for the LGBTQ+ community and supported inclusion for the LGBTQ+ community in the past (i.e. have you spoken out publicly for policies at your place of business, testified before government bodies, adopted written policies for your employees, marched for equal rights, etc.)? Please be specific.

I've lived in Brookline for 20 years now, and at least in our bubble, there's been a broad anti-homophobia demeanor since before the word antiracism was broadly used.

Which is to say, my public and political experiences around LGBTQ issues have been overwhelmingly celebratory since Goodridge. Rainbow flags hanging from porches, pride in Pride Month, marching in the Pride Parade, safe space stickers, and the like are the norm. It's a wonderful space, and I will bring that public, frank expectation of full acceptance everywhere I go.

### Additional Information (Optional)

Please use the space below to provide any additional information you would like us to know about your candidacy. This can include polling information, support

by various levels of the Democratic Party, etc. Feel free to attach additional documentation as needed.

My campaign is in good shape. On the doors, many likely (or somewhat-likely) voters recognize me and are excited to see me. I'm well ahead in cash on hand, roughly \$170k – \$45k. 80 percent of the Select Board is endorsing me, as is 80% of town-wide electeds and over 75% of the 255 Town Meeting Members.

The endorsement of BSSD is important to me because I want to win with my friends. I want my voters, and everyone else in my district, to know where I'm coming from, where I'm at, and where I'm going. I believe endorsements are a very simple, very clear way to communicate both my and my community's pro-LGBTQIA+ politics.

Public Bio for Website

**Tommy Vitolo** (D-Brookline) a progressive Democrat running for re-election as the State Representative for the 15<sup>th</sup> Norfolk District. First elected in 2018, Tommy has remained focused on fights to promote equity, improve public education, and protect the environment. He has worked to pass significant legislation to expand reproductive health care access including abortions, to reform policing in Massachusetts, to invest in underfunded schools, and to expand Massachusetts' leadership on green energy.