

## 2020 Candidate Questionnaire Response

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### **How can a member of Congress best support the LGBTQ community?**

As a member of Congress, I will vote to pass the Equality Act immediately as well as Reps Khanna and Lee's SAFE SEX Worker Study Act. I will also ensure that any bill that invokes religious freedom to discriminate against same-sex families and couples will not pass. I have pledged to make my future district office and Congressional offices safe/sanctuary spaces, hire an LGBTQ liaison, and work with the community to ensure that any laws passed allow them to live with dignity.

### **The Trump Administration has actively moved to impose policies that discriminate against same-sex couples seeking to become foster or adoptive parents via placement agencies that receive federal funding. Do you oppose these actions? If elected to Congress, what if anything would you do to correct these policies?**

I strongly oppose these actions. These laws openly discriminate against same-sex couples and deny vulnerable children the care they need. I will vote to repeal these policies, increase funding to agencies like the Administration for Children and Families to help match children with families, and revoke federal funding for agencies that do discriminate against LGBTQ couples.

### **While HIV rates are decreasing overall, new HIV infections are increasing for certain LGBTQ populations, notably among young men of color and transgender women. Moreover, ending the HIV epidemic is uneven across the country with some jurisdictions doing far better than others. What would you do to increase access to HIV preventative medication (PrEP and PEP)? What steps would you take to better and more effectively end the HIV epidemic across the country?**

As someone who has lost close family members to AIDS, I'd fight to have PrEP and PEP available at no cost under Medicare for All as a member of Congress. I would also increase funding for HIV research at the CDC and NIH as well as education and prevention with the HRSA and the HHS Center for Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships.

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**Do you support the Stop Enabling Sex Traffickers Act (SESTA) and the Fight Online Sex Trafficking Act (FOSTA) as passed and signed into law? What steps would you take to address the concerns of consensual sex workers who indicate that these statutes have made them less safe and less able to negotiate condom use?**

I do not support SESTA FOSTA because of the unintended consequences for sex workers, particularly sex workers of color and transgender sex workers. I would like to start by passing the SAFE SEX Worker Study Act, decriminalizing sex work, and work directly with consensual sex workers to determine what laws would best protect them and ensure their safety. There were at least 22 black trans women murdered last year, and if it's an unintended consequence of SESTA FOSTA, these victims deserve justice and deliberate action from their members of Congress.

**If elected, what restrictions, if any, on the use of solitary confinement in federal prisons would you seek?**

Solitary confinement is cruel, inhumane, and disproportionately targets inmates who are POC, LGBTQ, and transgender. We need to hold corrections officers accountable for their actions. I support the NYC Jails Action Coalition and the #HALTsolitary Campaign's [Blueprint for Ending Solitary in NYC](#) and will fight for these changes on the federal level.

**Do you agree that Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, prohibits employment discrimination against LGBTQ+ individuals? On October 8, 2019, the US Supreme Court heard three cases to determine whether it does. If the Court finds that Title VII does not apply to LGBTQ+ individuals, what if any legislation would you pursue?**

I believe that because sexual orientation and gender identity are not stated explicitly in Title VII, it has been exploited by some employers to discrimination against the LGBT+ community with impunity. If the Supreme Court determines that Title VII does not apply to LGBTQ+ individuals, we MUST pass the Equality Act and then strengthen the civil rights for this community wherever possible.

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**Do you support HR 5, known as the Equality Act, which recently passed in the House and would prohibit discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in a wide variety of areas including public accommodations and facilities, education, federal funding, employment, housing, credit, and the jury system? Specifically, the bill defines and includes sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity among the prohibited categories of discrimination or segregation to existing civil rights law and prohibits the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 from providing a claim, defense, or basis for challenging such protections.**

I wholeheartedly support HR 5 the Equality Act.

**Do you commit to using inclusive and gender neutral language in press releases and other announcements (e.g., “the people of the...” instead of “the men and women of the...”)?**

I absolutely commit to using inclusive and gender neutral language in my public announcements.