

GUARDIAN

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Primary Election Day is August 28 – see full candidate Q&A at www.hrcncf.org

HRCNCF Queries Candidates for Alachua County School Board, County Commission, State House & Senate, and Congress

The Human Rights Council of North Central Florida (HRCNCF) received questionnaire responses from most candidates that will appear on the August 28 primary ballot. These included candidates in party primaries for Alachua County Commission, Florida House & Senate and Congress; it also included candidates for the nonpartisan Alachua County School Board races.

Selected questions with responses are printed below for candidates appearing on the Aug. 28 primary ballot; for the full questionnaire responses visit HRCNCF's website at www.hrcncf.org.

Primary Election Day is August 28, with early voting running daily from 9AM to 6 PM Saturday, August 18 to Saturday, August 25 at five voting sites: the Supervisor of Elections office at 515 N. Main St., and at the Millhopper and Tower Road libraries, and at Legacy Park in Alachua and Melrose United Methodist Church.

In the County Commission District 2 Democratic primary, former Gainesville City Commissioner Randy Wells and Marihelen Wheeler face off. Whoever wins this race on Aug. 28 will face Libertarian Party candidate Gregory Caudill, Scott Costello, who is running without party affiliation, and write-in candidate Ward Scott on the Nov. 6 general election ballot.

“Both Wells and Wheeler provided excellent responses to the questionnaire, and they both have had a solid track record of supporting LGBT rights,” said HRCNCF President Bob Karp.

In the County Commission District 4 race, incumbent commissioner Ken Cornell will face write-in candidate Franklin Morey on the Nov. 6 ballot.

In the Alachua County School Board District 1 race, incumbent board member April Griffin faces off against Tina Certain. HRCNCF Board member Linda Bassham noted that Tina Certain had excellent questionnaire responses; April Griffin was good on some responses but not others. For example, she did not explicitly indicate her own support for Gay-Straight Alliance clubs.

In the other two School Board races, incumbent Gunnar Paulson faces challengers Judy DeJesus McNeil

Three ways to vote:

Vote by Mail: Contact the Supervisor of Elections at 352-374-5252 or at www.VoteAlachua.com to have a ballot mailed to you.

Vote Early: Early voting runs from Saturday, August 18, to Saturday, August 25, at the Supervisor of Elections Office, 515 N. Main St., the Millhopper and Tower Road libraries, Legacy Park in Alachua, and Melrose United Methodist Church. Hours are 9 AM to 6 PM daily.

Vote on Election Day: Vote in your own polling precinct from 7 AM to 7 PM on Tuesday, August 28.

and April Tisher for District 3, while incumbent Rob Hyatt faces challenger Paul Wolfe for District 5. All School Board candidates responded to the questionnaire.

“Both Gunnar Paulson and Rob Hyatt have continued to be strong advocates on LGBT issues for both students and staff,” said Karp.

As for local state legislative races, Democrats Jason Haeseler and Amol Jethwani are vying to run against incumbent Republican State House District 21 representative Chuck Clemons.

“Both Haeseler and Jethwani provided equally impressive responses to the questionnaire,” said Karp. Haeseler is a veteran and engineer; Jethwani is a UF student who is openly gay. District 21 covers much of western Alachua County and Gainesville, but also includes Dixie and Gilchrist counties.

Incumbent Democratic District 20 representative Clovis Watson Jr. was re-elected without opposition.

In the State Senate District 8 race, which covers all of Alachua and Putnam Counties as well as the northern part of Marion County, Democrats Kayser Enneking and Olysha Magruder are competing to run against incumbent Republican State Senator Keith Perry and former Gainesville City Commissioner Charles Goston, who is running without party affiliation.

“Both Enneking and Magruder provided equally excellent responses to the questionnaire,” said Bassham. She noted that Sen. Keith Perry has not committed to sponsor or support the Florida Competitive Workforce Act, which would expand LGBT nondiscrimination protections statewide.

For U.S. Congress District 3, which covers all of Alachua County, there are two party primaries on the Aug. 28 ballot. Former Gainesville City Commissioner Yvonne

Hayes Hinson, Dushyant Gosai and Tom Wells are competing in the Democratic primary. All three candidates responded to the questionnaire.

“Yvonne Hayes Hinson provided very good responses to the questionnaire, which is no surprise since she was consistently supportive of LGBT issues during her term on the City Commission,” said Bassham.

Judson Sapp and incumbent Ted Yoho are competing in the Republican primary. Both did not return questionnaire responses. Yoho received a 0% score from the Human Rights Campaign for votes he cast in the current term of Congress.

In addition to voting early from August 18-25, voters may request a vote-by-mail ballot by calling the Alachua County Supervisor of Elections Office at 352-374-5252 or ordering one on-line at www.votealachua.com. On Primary Election Day, August 28, voters must go to their own precinct polling locations to cast a ballot.

2018 Questionnaire Responses for Candidates on August 28 Primary Ballot

For full candidate Q&A, visit online at www.hrcncf.org.

Responses to 2018 Alachua County Commission Candidate Questionnaire

1. **Do you support an ordinance which would prohibit state-licensed practitioners from carrying out the practice of “conversion therapy” for minors within Alachua County? Conversion therapy is counseling based on the erroneous assumption that LGBTQ identities are mental disorders that can be cured through treatment. This ordinance would not outlaw the practice among non-licensed persons, such as those associated with faith-based organizations.**

ALACHUA COUNTY COMMISSION District 2 Democratic Primary:

RANDY WELLS (DEM.): Yes. I fully support a county ordinance banning so-called “conversion therapy” for minors (parallel to ordinances already adopted by Gainesville, many other municipalities in the state, Palm Beach County and Broward County).

MARIHELEN WHEELER (DEM.): Yes, indeed I would support this ordinance. In the 22 years of teaching in Gainesville, I've watched an increasing number of young people grapple with sexual identity in Middle School as the subject is more openly discussed. Open discussion is the best way to address any confusion minors experience as they navigate through the issues of human sexuality, not heavy handed directives or threats from those who would “fix” the problem.

2. **The Florida Competitive Workforce Act (HB 347 and SB 66) seeks to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity statewide in employment, housing and public accommodations. Would you support an Alachua County resolution that would urge the Florida Legislature to pass this bill?**

ALACHUA COUNTY COMMISSION District 2 Democratic Primary:

RANDY WELLS (DEM.): Yes. Alachua County should be a leader calling for Florida to protect the dignity and rights of all. It is not acceptable to discriminate in employment, housing, or public accommodations on the

basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, any more than race or sex. In addition to simply being the right thing to do, these protections would strengthen our economy by enhancing Florida's appeal to employers, employees, and visitors.

MARIHELEN WHEELER (DEM.): The simple answer is yes, I would support such a resolution to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity as outlined.

3. **Do you advocate diversity training for county employees to include lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender issues? If so, how would you improve or strengthen this training?**

ALACHUA COUNTY COMMISSION District 2 Democratic Primary:

RANDY WELLS (DEM.): Yes. I advocate including LGBTQ issues in diversity training for county employees. Based on my own participation and feedback from employees, such training can be stronger based on: 1) Increasing quality of the facilitator; 2) Making it integral to an environment of lifelong learning and skill building; 3) Personal storytelling and relationships as powerful anecdotes to discrimination; and 4) More creative tapping of the community's innovative culture of storytelling, podcasts, fun activities, meeting people, etc.

MARIHELEN WHEELER (DEM.): I would advocate training for county employees to include these issues as our society is becoming more open and better informed. Social norms are slowly evolving and teachers and police officers particularly are in situations that require updated knowledge of trends and activities that address psychological challenges that come from such change. I would support the requirement that these issues be addressed and updated yearly through inservice requirements in education, law enforcement and perhaps medical personnel.

4. **Do you support the County's annual proclamations in recognition of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Pride Days?**

ALACHUA COUNTY COMMISSION District 2 Democratic Primary:

RANDY WELLS (DEM.): Yes. Proclamations and events such as Pride Days help create and maintain an affirmative, public conversation about equal rights and history – and place elected officials and other citizens

shoulder to shoulder with the LGBTQ community.

MARIEHELEN WHEELER (DEM.): I do support these proclamations and am glad to participate in such events. I find many of my students and former students at these events and have the opportunity to show support and acceptance for who they are as human beings.

5. **In 2016, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a rule as part of the Affordable Care Act that prohibits discrimination in health programs and activities that receive funding from HHS. Prior to the implementation of this rule most individual and group health plans excluded coverage for gender transition services. After January 1, 2017, fully insured individual and group policies that receive funding from HHS will include coverage for gender transition services. This rule applies differently to large employer plans that are “self-funded”. A self-funded plan is one where the employer assumes the health plan liability and risk in exchange for more control over the plan’s administration and funding levels. Alachua County is a self-funded entity. Do you support Alachua County including coverage for gender transition services for their own employees?**

ALACHUA COUNTY COMMISSION District 2 Democratic Primary:

RANDY WELLS (DEM.): Yes. I support including gender transition services in health coverage for county employees.

MARIEHELEN WHEELER (DEM.): I would support Alachua County addressing the demands for increased health coverage to meet the needs of our changing society. These health care needs should be considered significant enough to be covered by a self-funded plan.

Q. Briefly, why are you running for this elected office?

ALACHUA COUNTY COMMISSION District 2 Democratic Primary:

RANDY WELLS (DEM.): I am passionate about local action, and bring a background, personal approach, and policy direction that are critically important to our county at this moment. I have a proven track record (as a former city commissioner, non-profit executive, community activist, parent, and small business owner) of effectively building bridges amidst differing opinions – always with the purpose of building social, economic, and environmental equity.

MARIEHELEN WHEELER (DEM.): I have been an advocate for children and working families and environmental issues, but have never had the platform to truly influence decision making on these important issues. I have a unique perspective of problem solving coming from a background of public service and will bring balance to the Alachua County Commission. The educational and economic inequities we have identified are those my skill set as an educator provides me with: insights, communication and cooperative abilities.

Responses to 2018 School Board of Alachua County Candidate Questionnaire

6. **National studies have shown that harassment and violence toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) youth, and those who are perceived as gay, in public schools leads to higher dropout rates and up to three times the rate of suicide among LGBT teens compared to their straight peers. Would you vote to support implementation of an anti-bullying policy that specifically protects LGBT as well as other vulnerable students?**

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 1:

TINA CERTAIN: Yes – SBAC has adopted an anti-bullying policy. Like any other policy, it's only effective when enforced. When complaints are made, they should be investigated and not dismissed. The victim shouldn't be shamed for coming speaking up.

APRIL GRIFFIN: Alachua County Public Schools currently has policy 5517.01 – Bullying and Harassment. This policy was first adopted in 2007 and has been updated in 2008, 2013, 2016, and 2017. I have voted in favor of the policy since being elected in 2010.

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 3:

JUDITH DEJESUS McNEIL: The School board has anti-bullying policies 5517 Anti-Harassment, 5517.01 Bullying and Harassment and Title IX found in the Student Codes of Conduct (2018-2019). A Compliance Officer is also available at (352) 955-7671 ext. 1610.

GUNNAR PAULSON: I support a policy protecting LGBT as well as other vulnerable students. The School Board of Alachua County Policy 5517 states the following: The superintendent will vigorously enforce its prohibition against discriminatory harassment on the basis of race, color, sex (Including sexual orientation, transgender status, or gender identity). This is just part of the policy. I will look further into what we can do with our policies to protect our students.

APRIL TISHER: Yes, I believe that all students deserve a safe school environment regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation.

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 5:

ROB HYATT: Yes. Policies should protect all students at risk including LGBT youth. ACPS policies address anti-bullying. Schools and all school-related activities must be a safe and inclusive environment for all.

PAUL WOLFE: Bullying is something that impacts students of all walks of life, regardless of income, sex, gender, race, or any other degree of dividing factors. Measures should be taken to strengthen anti-bullying efforts throughout schools through teaching respect for fellow students as well as empowering teachers to take action when witnessing bullying, an area in which teachers feel that they are often restricted to the point of inaction by local regulations and resolutions.

7. **Please provide an example of one proactive measure that the School Board could take to provide a safer, friendlier learning environment for LGBT students.**

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 1:

TINA CERTAIN: There is a current anti-bullying policy. SBAC should enforce this policy by punishing offenders when an incidence is reported. Teachers, staff should not overlook when LGBT/any student is harassed.

APRIL GRIFFIN: Provide professional development for our teachers and staff on the specific needs of our LGBT students. Guidance counselors along with our Professional Development team could work with some of our LGBT students and put together a training for our teachers. A “What I wish you knew” type of training to help our educators better understand our students' unique issues.

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 3:

JUDITH DEJESUS McNEIL: A. Have the Compliance Officer (CO) contact all schools monthly to ask for any violations. B. CO Verifies documents are logged by leadership and offended student. (a

school board member receives monthly summary reports). Based on recent current events, when policies are not carried out, problems arise from the student or family of harassed or bullied student.

GUNNAR PAULSON: Our district is implementing the following this summer and next fall with a variety of proactive measures. ● Training for gay/straight club sponsors. ● Equality Florida is coming this summer to give training to our district administrators, school counselors, deans, brt/s, etc. ● ACCPTA (County Parent/Teacher Assc.) is organizing training for all paraprofessionals. (I am on the executive board for ACCPTA).

APRIL TISHER: Providing training for staff as well as students is a start. Also ensuring that all students know who their school guidance counselor and/or social worker is on campus and that there are a safe person to talk to is invaluable.

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 5:

ROB HYATT: Train all employees. Do not assume that everyone understands the needs and issues specific to LGBT students. This should be part of new employee orientation and required as part of professional development.

PAUL WOLFE: A safer environment for LGBT students would be best started through, as mentioned above, empowering teachers to take action when witnessing bullying, as well as expanding social services for all students, including LGBT students, which will give them an outlet for their frustrations over situations in school as well as a place for them to report their instances of bullying.

8. **Do you support the formation of student clubs known as “Gay-Straight Alliances” which provide an opportunity for gay and nongay students to meet together on school property as do other extracurricular clubs?**

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 1:

TINA CERTAIN: Yes.

APRIL GRIFFIN: Some of our schools currently have these clubs. Students need to have a teacher sponsor and the principal's approval. This is the process for any clubs on our campuses.

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 3:

JUDITH DEJESUS McNEIL: School board policy 5730 Equal Access for Nondistrict-Sponsored, Student Clubs and Activities, details the bylaws that must be implemented for a “Gay-Straight Alliances” club.

GUNNAR PAULSON: Yes, I support the formation of student clubs known as “Gay-Straight Alliances.” In our school district we have such clubs already in our district. There are represented with various names. The following are some of the clubs in our district. Gay-Straight Alliance = Are presently at GHS and Lofton. Diversity is at Kanapaha Middle School, Lights are at Buchholz. I am not sure how many more clubs we have, but I certainly will research how many more clubs we have, support them and make sure our policies are written to support them.

APRIL TISHER: I have been reading up on this on the glsen.org website because it was not something I was familiar with. I still feel like I need to do more research on this topic, but in general, I am in support of a respectful environment that promotes tolerance and acceptance and where students of shared interests can come together to learn about each other.

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 5:

ROB HYATT: Yes.

PAUL WOLFE: I believe that all organizations not involved in hateful or violent rhetoric should certainly be allowed to organize on school campuses without impediment from administrators, and, as schools are often melting pots of ideological sets, it should be fairly easy to find a teacher sponsor for such an organization (as most schools which offer clubs require there to be a teacher sponsor).

9. **In 2016, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued a rule as part of the Affordable Care Act that prohibits discrimination in health programs and activities that receive funding from HHS. Prior to the implementation of this rule most individual and group health plans excluded coverage for gender transition services. After January 1, 2017, fully insured individual and group policies that receive funding from HHS will include coverage for gender transition services. This rule applies differently to large employer plans that are “self-funded”. A self-funded plan is one where the employer assumes the health plan liability and risk in exchange for more control over the plan’s administration and funding levels. The School Board of Alachua County is a self-funded entity. Do you support the School Board including coverage for gender transition services for their own employees?**

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 1:

TINA CERTAIN: Yes I would.

APRIL GRIFFIN: We have a health committee that makes recommendations for our self-funded health plan. This committee is made up of non instructional employees, teachers, administrators and our union president. I would support it a recommendation brought forward from the health committee.

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 3:

JUDITH DEJESUS McNEIL: The School Board does not make recommendations for health or life services, this is governed by the Insurance Committee. School Board policy 4420.01 describes general provision to employees. The Insurance Committee has included some type of service in the plan and the benefit office has detailed information.

GUNNAR PAULSON: Yes, I support including coverage for gender transition services for our own employees. I served as chairman for our insurance committee for 10 years before elected to the school board in 2008. I have stayed on the committee since as an ex-officio. We do not meet again to fall. At that time I certainly will bring this issue up for discussion and strongly voice my support to the committee.

APRIL TISHER: I do not know specifically everything that the health plan for SBAC covers or excludes at this time, but do I know that all insurance plans exclude many non-medically necessary procedures. I think it is a difficult decision to make when deciding what life changing medical procedures are covered and which ones are not. For example plastic surgery for someone who has been burned or in an accident may not be medically necessary, but could be life changing. Gender transition services are life changing, but not usually medically necessary.

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 5:

ROB HYATT: Yes.

PAUL WOLFE: Instead of specifically subsidizing these services, I believe it is necessary for the school board to offer the option for employees to enter the private insurance market with a certain monetary value of subsidized coverage being offered, which could include gender transition services if the employee so wishes to have those covered by their plans.

Q. Briefly, why are you running for this elected office?

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 1:

TINA CERTAIN: To be a voice for all children but especially those who are not performing well. I also would like to advocate for equitable allocation of resources and academic opportunities. To partner with all stakeholders not just those who show up at mid-day meetings and who volunteer. To be transparent and accountable to citizens.

APRIL GRIFFIN: I was first elected in 2010 and ran because I wanted to make a difference for our students, teachers and schools. I have worked very hard since then to learn as much as I can about the issues our schools face and what my role is as a school board member. I've visited every school at least once a year since being elected, established an annual breakfast for board members and student government representatives from all of our high schools, immersed myself in our community by being an active member of many boards and non profits. In 2012 I completed by Certified Board Member distinction by completing 96 hours of training on policy, finance and Boardmanship. I've been very involved in our state organization, the Florida School Boards Assoc. (FSBA) and am currently serving at the President. I know the education issues facing our schools, students and the state and will continue to be an advocate for public education, students and teachers. For more information, please visit my website www.April4schools.com.

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 3:

JUDITH DEJESUS McNEIL: It is my desire to address equitable service for all students. Students with disabilities, ESOL, gifted, lower economic status students and the general student body needs a board member who can speak from experience and voice their concerns. I am a teacher, parent, and a community leader equipped to serve and represent the school district.

GUNNAR PAULSON: This is a perilous time concerning public education and the people we elect will define its future. The person we elect must have shown they will fight for our children and make the tough decisions needed to save public education. I have shown continuously I have the proven leadership, strength and vision to meet the challenges we will face. This is why I am running for School Board again!

APRIL TISHER: I have been involved in the Alachua County Public Schools for the past 9 years as a mom, classroom volunteer, PTA member and board member, SAC committee member and a member of the Howard Bishop Community School Community Council. I have learned to be an advocate for my own children in navigating the school system in many aspects; gifted, learning disabilities, life threatening medical conditions, magnet programs, etc. I strongly feel that a parent who currently has children in our school system should have a voice on the school board. That representation is currently missing from our board. I spend time in the schools, in the classrooms and in my home with three current students every day. I think I can provide a perspective that others cannot.

ALACHUA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD District 5:

ROB HYATT: I was provided a quality K-12 public schools education and affordable degrees from a public university. Current and future generations deserve and need no less. As a teacher in Florida for thirty-eight years including sixteen in ACPS my commitment is to the needs of all children. I am running for a second term on the Alachua County School Board in order to continue the work I have started. Please visit ReElectRob.com for further details.

PAUL WOLFE: I am running for Alachua County School Board District 5 because I have seen the struggles that students, teachers, and administrators face on a daily basis, and I believe my unique position as a student fresh out of high school gives me a different and recent perspective as to those problems faced.

Responses to 2018 State House/Senate Candidate Questionnaire

10. **National studies have shown that harassment and violence toward lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth leads to higher dropout rates and up to three times the rate of suicide among LGBT teens compared to their non-gay peers. Would you sponsor and/or vote to support a bill that requires school districts to specifically prohibit bullying directed toward students based on real or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity, thus creating a safer learning environment for all students?**

STATE SENATE District 8 Democratic Primary:

KAYSER ENNEKING (DEM.): Yes. The increased suicide rates among our LGBT youth is one of the most tragic and disturbing trends occurring as a result of our failure to establish safe and welcoming environments for children. Crafting policies geared towards creating an atmosphere of acceptance is vitally important for the well-being of our kids and a more tolerant society in the long-run. I would absolutely support the revision of our schools' bullying policies statewide.

OLYSHA MAGRUDER (DEM.): I would sponsor and/or support a bill that would specifically prohibit bullying based on their sexual orientation. No child should be made to feel unsafe in school for any reason especially for being who they are. Bullying and harassment has real and lasting damage, and we need strong, specific legislation that protects students who are targeted.

STATE HOUSE District 21 Democratic Primary:

JASON HAESELER (DEM.): Bullying in schools is a real and serious issue that needs to be addressed, but specifically it needs to be addressed in regards to the LGBT community. The high rates of dropouts and suicide shows the absolute need for a change. I would both support and sponsor a bill that makes our schools a more inclusive and welcoming environment for ALL students to learn in by banning bullying based on gender identity or sexual orientation.

AMOL JETHWANI (DEM.): I would sponsor and vote to support a bill requiring school districts to specifically prohibit bullying directed towards students based on real or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity, having been an openly out high school student with the very real fear for my physical safety at times.

11. **The Florida Competitive Workforce Act (HB 347 and SB 66) seeks to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in places of employment, housing and public accommodations. Would you co-sponsor this bill, and if it were to come before you for a vote, would you vote for it?**

STATE SENATE District 8 Democratic Primary:

KAYSER ENNEKING (DEM.): Yes. We have both a moral and constitutional obligation to ensure that all people are treated equally. We cannot allow the discrimination of any person based upon any of their indelible characteristics, sexual orientation and gender identity included. I am entirely in support of the Competitive Workforce Act and plan to both co-sponsor it and vote in favor of it in the State Senate.

OLYSHA MAGRUDER (DEM.): I definitely would co-sponsor and vote for legislation that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and

gender identity. Just like no child should be made to feel unsafe for being themselves in school, neither should they face discrimination on that basis into adulthood. I will strongly advocate for this legislation and do everything in my power to pass it. I believe there is broad public support for this legislation and with a coordinated campaign can gather enough momentum to pass.

STATE HOUSE District 21 Democratic Primary:

JASON HAESELER (DEM.): I would both sponsor and vote for this bill. Discrimination is a pervasive problem in our society that can occur in all areas of one's life. Sexual orientation and gender identity should not be a consideration in whether or not you get a job or a decent place to live. A bill protecting the LGBT community from these and any type of discrimination is needed.

AMOL JETHWANI (DEM.): I will co-sponsor and vote for The Florida Competitive Workforce Act. I have lobbied in support of this measure previously in Tallahassee.

12. **Do you support a bill which would prohibit state-licensed practitioners from carrying out the practice of "conversion therapy" for minors in Florida? Conversion therapy is counseling based on the erroneous assumption that LGBTQ identities are mental disorders that can be cured through treatment. This ordinance would not outlaw the practice among non-licensed persons, such as those associated with faith-based organizations. A dozen states and the District of Columbia now ban the practice.**

STATE SENATE District 8 Democratic Primary:

KAYSER ENNEKING (DEM.): Yes. As I referenced before sexual orientation and gender identity are indelible characteristics of every person. Understanding this any attempt to "cure" an individual of these characteristics is both harmful and wrong. The American Psychological Association and other major professional, medical, and academic institutions have all rejected the merits of conversion therapy. We have an obligation to prevent these inaccurate and flawed so-called treatments being forced upon our youth.

OLYSHA MAGRUDER (DEM.): Being LGBTQ+ is not an illness. The American Pediatrics Association and the American Counseling Association are just a couple of associations that have publicly condemned conversion therapy. Conversion therapy is unethical and has no place in a treatment setting and is, in fact, child abuse when applied to minors due to the harmful outcomes (i.e., depression, anxiety, suicide). I would support legislation to ban any practice of conversion therapy, and I would add that non-licensed persons should most definitely not be able to practice this because any "therapy" practiced by non-professionals is harmful.

STATE HOUSE District 21 Democratic Primary:

JASON HAESELER (DEM.): I would fully support banning conversion therapy for minors in Florida. Identifying as a part of the LGBTQ community is not a disorder that needs to be cured. Conversion therapy is a cruel and abhorrent practice that has no place in our society.

AMOL JETHWANI (DEM.): I would support a bill prohibiting conversion therapy for minors. This is an issue I have spoken on with legislators in Tallahassee and at City Hall in Gainesville.

13. **Some states have proposed bills which would both eliminate local LGBT nondiscrimination ordinances as well as restrict transgender individuals to using public bathroom facilities that correspond to the gender listed on their birth certificates, as opposed to the gender which they identify with. If a similar bill**

came before the Florida Legislature, would you vote for or against it? Why or why not?

STATE SENATE District 8 Democratic Primary:

KAYSER ENNEKING (DEM.): I would vote against any measure like this. Any discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity is entirely wrong and must be disallowed by law. I would oppose any preemption of local nondiscrimination ordinances. Any attempt to restrict an individual from using a restroom that complies with their gender identity is an act of discrimination that is an affront to every individual's right to be treated equally under the law.

OLYSHA MAGRUDER (DEM.): I would strongly oppose any effort to institutionalize discrimination including homophobia. Some cities have been able to make progress in regards to this but the only way to ensure that LGBTQ+ individuals do not face a patchwork of discrimination in Florida is to address the issue on the state level with appropriate legislation that protect their rights. On the local level, I typically favor home rule because I believe the state should set the floor on standards, not the ceiling. That extends to this issue as well. While I would absolutely oppose any municipality attempting to enshrine discrimination in their laws, I do believe they should be allowed to protect their LGBTQ+ citizens in the absence of a statewide non-discrimination ordinance.

STATE HOUSE District 21 Democratic Primary:

JASON HAESELER (DEM.): I would vote against this bill. Non-discrimination ordinances are important to make sure that every person is treated equally and eliminating them would be a large step in the wrong direction. I would also have to vote against a bill that would force transgender individuals to use their birth certificate gender bathroom as it infringes on their individual freedoms.

AMOL JETHWANI (DEM.): I oppose both of these initiatives, and would not only vote against them, but actively work to accomplish securing LGBTQ nondiscrimination protections wherever they are lacking, and also work to support the Trans community in the face of bigotry from the halls of government in Tallahassee.

**HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL
OF NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA, INC.**

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THE NEXT MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS
THURSDAY, AUGUST 9, 2018, AT 7:00 PM AT PRIDE
COMMUNITY CENTER OF NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA,
3131 NW 13TH ST, GAINESVILLE

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Q. Briefly, why are you running for this elected office?

STATE SENATE District 8 Democratic Primary:

KAYSER ENNEKING (DEM.): As a physician I have advocated for patient safety, measured high quality outcomes, and accessibility of medical services for patients everyday for the past 27 years. I want to bring that much needed experience to the Legislature as the only doctor in the State Senate. My passion for healthcare, my desire to strengthen our public education system, and protect the basic human rights of our people has driven me to run for office.

OLYSHA MAGRUDER (DEM.): As the daughter of a lifelong public school teacher and southern baptist preacher, I was taught the value of service to others from an early age. Into adulthood, I struggled with

poverty and worked my way through college, earning a doctorate of education. After many years of activism, I felt called to serve and run for this office. For far too long, our government has been run by the haves with very little thought given to the have nots. It's time to change that. I'm running to provide a government that protects all of its citizens and provides them with the tools, skills, environment, education, and opportunity to reach their full potential.

STATE HOUSE District 21 Democratic Primary:

JASON HAESELER (DEM.): I am running for Florida House District 21 because I believe it is time for forward thinking change in Florida. We need a legislature that will work to make sure that every person is equally protected under the law. I was proud to walk my sister down the aisle the day that she married her wife, but marriage equality was only the beginning. There is more work to be done and that is why I am running.

AMOL JETHWANI (DEM.): I am running to provide access to opportunity to all Floridians, to be a champion for the LGBTQ community, to be the first Asian American in the legislature, and to bring the unique perspective of a queer, millennial, gay, child of immigrants, activist to Florida politics and the legislative process.

Responses to 2018 U.S. Congress Candidate Questionnaire

Note that no responses were received from Republicans Judson Sapp and Ted Yoho.

14. Do you support or oppose the Equality Act (H.R. 2282, S. 1006) which seeks to prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity in credit, education, employment, federally funded programs, housing, jury service, and public spaces and services?

U.S. CONGRESS District 3 Democratic Primary:

DUSHYANT GOSAI (DEM.): I strongly support Equality Act. No one should be discriminated on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity for anything from credit to services.

YVONNE HAYES HINSON (DEM.): I support the Equality Act because I seek to end discrimination in all sectors of our society. Over the years, various laws have allowed discrimination to exist, and it is insane that these problems exist today. It is my mission to put an end to this. Since the creation of the Civil Rights Act in 1964, discrimination has been a pressing issue in congress. The decline of explicit discrimination does not mark its absence. We must continue to press on, in search of discrimination's abatement.

TOM WELLS (DEM.): I support without reservation.

15. Do you support or oppose legislation that would permit businesses to discriminate against LGBT and other protected classes of people based on the business owner's religious beliefs? Why or why not?

U.S. CONGRESS District 3 Democratic Primary:

DUSHYANT GOSAI (DEM.): I would oppose any legislation that would permit to discriminate against LGBT and other protected classes of people based on the business owner's religious belief. Many business owners could misuse this law just to insult LGBT community by refusing service.

YVONNE HAYES HINSON (DEM.): Businesses are not supported by employee's religious beliefs and should not be run based on these beliefs. Members of the LGBT community deserve to be treated as more than second class citizens. Anyone's personal beliefs and values, should

not exempt them from treating these individuals as less than deserving of their service. If an owner wants to incorporate their religion into the workplace, then they should work at the church, instead of owning a business.

TOM WELLS (DEM.): Support. Religious beliefs is the new catch-all phrase for every type of discrimination; as if one could hide intolerance and hatred behind a cloak of sanctity.

16. Do you support or oppose legislation which would allow transgender military service members to serve openly?

U.S. CONGRESS District 3 Democratic Primary:

DUSHYANT GOSAI (DEM.): I support legislation which would allow transgender military service members to serve openly.

YVONNE HAYES HINSON (DEM.): I support legislation that allows transgender military service members to serve. There should be no limits on their ability to serve, and there should be no limits on who is eligible to serve. If women and men can serve openly, then so can transgender.

TOM WELLS (DEM.): Support.

17. In a turnabout from the previous administration, the U.S. Department of Education said it is no longer investigating civil rights complaints from transgender students barred from school bathrooms that match their gender identity. In May a federal court in Virginia ruled in favor of Gavin Grimm, a transgender teen who has been fighting for the right to use the school restroom that aligns with his gender identity. Do you support or oppose allowing transgender students to use the school bathroom facilities that align with their gender identities?

U.S. CONGRESS District 3 Democratic Primary:

DUSHYANT GOSAI (DEM.): I support allowing transgender students to use the school bathroom facilities that align with their gender identities.

YVONNE HAYES HINSON (DEM.): Before the government's intrusion and political controversy, they were already doing it and nobody ever knew nor complained about it and I am very comfortable with them continuing to do so. Leaving these individuals to use a bathroom to which they do not identify, leaves them susceptible to unnecessary abuse. A person should be able to go to the bathroom without being afraid that they will be ridiculed or harmed.

TOM WELLS (DEM.): Support. The present administration is lighting fires trying to burn every strand of the social safety net as well as torching every element of social justice. This operation is ongoing in every Cabinet department & in (essentially) all 73 agencies granted regulatory authority by Acts of Congress. And the lines of defense are tenuous. For Civil Rights issues, Federal judges are being daily tested – with positive results more often than I expected. Regulatory abuse, which is rampant, can be stymied by Congressional Review. This will not happen until we have (True Blue) Democratic majorities in House & Senate (e.g. the abnegation of Net Neutrality began today). And that is part of why I am running for Congress.

Q. Briefly, why are you running for this elected office?

U.S. CONGRESS District 3 Democratic Primary:

DUSHYANT GOSAI (DEM.): I am running for this office to serve the community where I work. As a student, parent of two students and as an educator, the rising cost of education and rising student loan debt is my main concern. I will work to have free college education for all US citizens and legal residents and interest rate reduction on student loans. Please visit gosaiforcongress.com for more info on my platform.

YVONNE HAYES HINSON (DEM.): I am running for election because I feel that I have been called to bring equity to our district and indeed our country. With my experiences in education, city commission and multiple different leadership roles, I believe that I can help push this district forward where we all can have domestic tranquility. I plan to reform and improve the current status quo including LGBT policies that the people can believe in and by truly setting a path for others to follow. If not me, then who? We all know it will not be Ted Yoho.

TOM WELLS (DEM.): I have grandchildren – by any humane estimate, about 7 billion of them. We live on a small spinning blue-green ball in an inhospitable universe. Our government is working daily to make this our home uninhabitable. Congress represents our best immediate opportunity to establish a roadblock on the highway to this particular Hell. This is the intersection of all Human Rights.