



2026 Democrat Primary Candidate Questionnaire

The Stonewall Democrats of Austin (SDA) respectfully submit the attached questionnaire to you should you be interested in being considered for the group's endorsement in the 2026 Democrat Primary elections. Stonewall Democrats represent the political interests of the LGBTQIA+ community here in Austin.

If you would like to be considered for endorsement, please **e-mail** your response to the questionnaire to jessica@stonewallaustin.org **by 11.59 pm on Friday, October 3, 2025**. The endorsement meeting will be held Wednesday October 8 at 6:30PM. Details on location will be announced on our website and social media.

Please limit your responses to the space below for each question. If you would like to attach a brief biography and summary of your qualifications, you are welcome to do so.

1. Please tell us why you are seeking the endorsement of SDA. How long have you considered yourself a Democrat? Do you have a history of involvement in Democratic politics and/or LGBTQ issues? If so, please briefly describe this history.

I'm seeking the endorsement of SDA because as a queer candidate in a jurisdiction that has elected very few openly LGBTQI+ people, I want to be recognized as someone who supports, represents, and advocates for our LGBTQI+ rights and causes. I've been a Democrat since 1988 when I voted for Dukakis. My involvement with the Democratic Party includes serving as a two-time precinct chair, serving as an officer in two Democratic Clubs, being elected to the statewide SDEC Stonewall Caucus, supporting Democratic candidates, and voting in Democratic primaries. My work with LGBTQI+ issues has largely been centered around awareness, support, and protection of LGBTQI+ youth in our community. I have advocated for the rights and services of LGBTQI+ youth in the CPS and juvenile systems, including appropriate housing based on gender identity, education and training, and destigmatization. The most important work I have done has been with LGBTQI+ youth who are in crisis, through collaborations with OutYouth and other community champions.

2. Although the landmark Supreme Court decision on June 15, 2022 affirming that the 1964 Civil Right Act protects gay, lesbian, and transgender from discrimination in employment was a huge victory in our fight of equality, LGBTQ Austinites face continued attacks from a hostile state government. How will you protect and strengthen our local protections and support passage of a comprehensive non-discrimination state law? (**JUDICIAL CANDIDATES PLEASE SKIP THIS QUESTION**)

3. What do think are the key issues impacting the quality of life of the LGBTQ community in Austin and Travis County?

I think the key issues impacting the quality of life of the LGBTQI community in Austin and Travis County are the erosion of the rights that we have fought for. Although Austin and Travis County have been hailed as progressive, it is not reflected in the makeup of our elected officials and not enough is being done to promote and protect our community.

4. Surveys of LGBTQ Austinites have shown that “17% of respondents report spending 50% or more of their monthly income on housing and 65% report spending 30% or more of their monthly income on housing. In addition to rent burden, discrimination against LGBTQ people seeking housing was reported during interviews, focus groups, and community survey. Housing was the highest ranked priority for all participants.” How will you improve access to housing for our community? (**JUDICIAL CANDIDATES PLEASE SKIP THIS QUESTION**)

5. Do you think the City of Austin and Travis County are doing enough to ensure equality for their LGBTQ employees?

I do not think COA or TC are doing enough to ensure equality for their LGBTQI employees. As a former TC employee, I witnessed first hand discrimination by upper management and a failure to protect the rights of the most vulnerable within our community, especially our LGBTQI youth.

6. If elected, would you commit to hiring and appointing LGBTQ individuals? If elected or re-elected, how will you strengthen the connection between the office you're running for and the LGBTQ community more generally?

Absolutely yes, within the bounds of legal hiring practices. As the only open LGBTQI appellate judge in the state, and the first out female appellate justice, I will continue to protect the critical rights of our community through cases that come before me.

7. Describe a step you would take, or have taken, or a proposal you would make, or have made if elected that would specifically benefit Austin's LGBTQ community.

When the TXSC issued its order on October 24 of this year stating that judges would not be penalized for refusing to perform same-sex (or other) weddings based on a deeply held religious belief, I found that to be an attack on our community and our Constitution, and I made the decision to run for a seat on that Court. We must do what we can within our power to protect our rights and the rights of our community.

Justice Maggie Ellis

Candidate Name

Maggie Ellis

Signature (electronic is acceptable)