

# STONEWALL DEMOCRATS OF DALLAS

2024 Endorsement Screening

## Day 2 Questionnaires

CD 32

HD 108

HD 112

CD 30

Note: The answers provided in this document are direct copies of the answers provided by the candidates. They have not been edited or changed in any way by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas.

# STONEWALL DEMOCRATS OF DALLAS

2024 Endorsement Screening

## CD-32 Questionnaires

### Candidates:

Jan McDowell

Justin Moore

Brian Williams

Zachariah Manning

Callie Butcher

Chris Panayiotou

Representative Julie Johnson

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**Question 3: Pronouns**

Jan - she/her/hers

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Brian - He/Him

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Callie - She/Her/Hers

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Justin - He/Him/His

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Zachariah - No answer provided to this question

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Chris - He Him

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Julie - She/her

**Question 4: 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?**

Jan - Yes. I have consistently voted Democrat.

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Brian - Yes, I am a Democrat and have a record of voting in Democratic primaries in Texas.

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Callie - Yes, I affirm my affiliation with the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. I have always volunteered with, raised money for, donated to, and voted for Democratic candidates. I voted in a Republican primary one time in 2016, and it was a vote against Donald Trump.

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Justin - Yes. I have only voted Democrat

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Zachariah - Yes. Democrat

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Chris - I do, I have voted in nearly every election since I turned 18, always in the Dem Primary, and have never voted for a Republican.

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Julie - My voting history is 100% Democratic.

**Question 5: Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.**

Jan - I strive to understand and appreciate all kinds of differences from my lived experience and to treat all people with respect and dignity. I've had several members of the LGBTQ+ community as staff and volunteers on my campaigns.

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Brian - Texas is one of the most hostile states for LGBTQ individuals. Just this past year, 30 anti-LGBTQ bills were introduced at the state legislature, and while they were all thankfully defeated, there is no indication things will let up. No doubt empowered by these political narratives, hate crimes rose 6% in Texas in 2022 over the year prior with over half of crimes targeting LGBTQ and Black people. I have friends and neighbors who've chosen to leave the state because they were afraid to raise their children in this environment. As a doctor and gun violence prevention advocate, I also know that LGBTQ individuals are twice as likely to be victims of gun violence as their straight, cisgendered peers.

Dallas is a strong, diverse and vibrant community where everyone should feel safe to live and love authentically. As a Member of Congress I will champion anti discrimination legislation & work hard to be an ally to the LGBTQ community. Growing up, I learned from my father the meaning of service before self, and that is the ethos I have carried with me throughout my career. I look forward to being a servant leader that works to meet the needs of every constituent.

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Callie - I am myself a trans woman in a same-sex relationship. I have personal experience with the coming out process, being rejected, being sent to a therapist to fix me, learning to hide who I am, and ultimately accepting myself and becoming a champion for the LGBTQ+ community.

I am heavily involved in the LGBTQ+ community in Dallas. I have served as the President of the Dallas LGBT+ Bar Association from June 2022 – December 2023 and have served on the board of the Dallas LGBT+ Bar Association since 2020; and I will continue to serve on the board as the immediate past president of the organization in 2024. I am the chair of Lambda Legal’s Dallas Leadership Council. I serve on the board of Black Tie Dinner. I volunteer with numerous LGBTQ+ organizations, including Equality Texas, Trans Empowerment Coalition, and Pride Frisco, and have spent countless days driving back and forth to Austin to advocate for the rights of LGBTQ+ people and those living with HIV here in Dallas and across the state.

Additionally, in my legal practice, I provide legal counsel to LGBTQ+ individuals on key issues, including discrimination faced in access to public accommodations, housing, banking, and other services. I also have first-hand experience assisting transgender adults and families with trans children in securing name changes and gender marker corrections. This includes my personal representation of folks as clients and as a volunteer attorney supervisor for law students at the virtual name and gender marker clinics and through the Dallas LGBT Bar Association's newly established name and gender marker clinic.

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Justin - My commitment to the LGBTQ+ community has been a cornerstone of my advocacy work. For example, it led me to represent DeeDee Hall. Her case is a poignant reminder of the ongoing struggles within the community, particularly for black, transgender individuals. Representing her interest resonates deeply with my resolve to champion equality and justice. It underscores my dedication to advancing an inclusive agenda that addresses the complex challenges faced by LGBTQ+ members in our society, ensuring their rights and dignity are upheld.

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Zachariah - My experiences are that people are people no matter who or how we love! I've had nothing but positive experiences.

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Chris - My experience with the LGBTQ+ community is limited, outside of a few relationships I have had in my personal life with members of the community. I believe in equal rights for all, and I don't believe people should be discriminated against because they are LGBTQ+. I have always been an advocate for same-sex marriage, as I am consistent in my belief of equal rights for all.

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Julie - I am an out, proud, married, gay woman who has championed the causes and campaigns for equality and gay rights since the 1990s. I adopted two children from another country before gay marriage was legal and have navigated the legal, adoption, and immigration systems with my own family in our pursuit of recognition and equality.

**Question 6: Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:**

Jan - As the only CPA in the field of candidates for CD-32, I think that I can bring a skill set that is somewhat lacking and very much needed in Congress. I consistently try to read and learn more to understand how our income and wealth inequality gap affects real people in the district and across our nation. As the former controller for a large group of orthopedic surgeons, I handled human resources, including payroll, insurance and the retirement plan. I calculated the monthly paychecks of the doctors, so I saw first-hand their top 1% pay, and the contrast with some employees who had worked there for years yet did not earn a living wage.

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Brian - I am a graduate of the US Air Force Academy and served 6 years as a commissioned officer in the Air Force. I then attended medical school at the University of South Florida and completed my surgery residency at Harvard Brigham and Women’s Hospital. As a doctor, my priority has been providing care to underserved communities. I moved to Dallas in 2010 to work at Parkland Hospital. In 2017, I was appointed by Dallas Mayor Mike Rawlings to Chair the Dallas Citizens’ Police Review Board and I was chosen as a health policy advisor by Judge Jenkins to help lead the County’s response to

the COVID-19 epidemic. In 2021, I was selected as a Robert Wood Johnson Health Policy Fellow and served in the offices of Connecticut Senator Chris Murphy and then-Speaker Nancy Pelosi. In Senator Murphy's office I helped research, draft and pass the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, the most significant gun violence prevention legislation in a generation. While on Speaker Pelosi's team, I worked on legislation to lower drug prices, improve Medicare and Medicaid, and bolster the healthcare workforce. My experience serving our community on the frontlines as a doctor and advocate and my policy experience at the local and federal level provide me with a unique and valuable perspective that is currently missing from Washington.

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Callie - I am a graduate of the University of Texas Cockrell School of Engineering, where I was the president of the Electrical Engineering Honor Society and the University of Texas School of Law. I have nearly a decade of experience working for one of the largest law firms in the country, where I used my background in electrical engineering to represent some of the biggest companies in the world in complex litigation and negotiations. This role required me to learn new technologies and legal theories quickly, as well as to work with opposing parties to achieve results that were favorable for my client. I have been recognized in the 2021–2024 editions of The Best Lawyers as a "Ones to Watch in America" and "Women in the Law: Ones to Watch" in Intellectual Property Litigation and was named a 2022 "Top Women Lawyer" by Texas Diversity Council. Finally, after 8+ years at the international law firm of Sidley Austin LLP, I left in 2022 to start my own law firm, Butcher Legal Group.

Beyond professional experience, I have personal experience with pressing issues that make me uniquely qualified to understand the needs and struggles of my constituents and serve as their representative in Congress. As a young American, I had to take on more than \$100,000 in student loans to get through law school and understand the burden and stress that comes with having to pay off such debt while trying to start a family.

I've spent years advocating against harmful legislation that targets my community, harms my children, and limits the rights of women, LGBTQ+ people, trans kids, access to books and other resources in schools, and prohibits DEI programs.

I know how scary it is to have a pregnant spouse suffer a life-threatening medical emergency requiring surgical intervention, an intervention that would not be allowed under our current laws due to risk to the fetus. I know what it's like to have a child with serious ongoing medical needs and struggle with the difficulty of making decisions about care, knowing we will incur significant uninsured expenses.

As the mother of twins who will start elementary in the fall, I understand how it feels to send your child to school and the fear that is always there in the back of your mind that today may be the day they are subject to gun violence.

I know the pain of being attacked by your government for who you are. I know what it's like to have others make decisions about policies that affect your community without really listening to the complex experiences of that community.

Additionally, I have significant experience walking into rooms where I am the only person like myself and having to win over folks who often have a more conservative bent. From the federal courtrooms of East Texas and Waco to committee hearings and legislator's offices at the state capitol to the Board of Directors of the Dallas Bar Association, I know how to build rapport with individuals who are predisposed to be against me and bring them into my corner.

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Justin - I have built coalitions locally and nationally fighting for the rights for oppressed people in this country. Whether it's for police accountability, the civil rights protected classes of people, and for the end of the war on drugs through the passing of the First Step Act, I have been a trusted fighter on the front lines who has seen measurable success for those marginalized groups I have fought for.

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Zachariah - Richardson ISD - Project Manager/District Planning Committee Member/District Safety & Security Committee member/Dallas ISD - Project Manager/PTA President/Real Estate Developer & Investor for 30+ years/TX & OK Real Estate Broker-Agent 25 years/General Contractor for 30+ years/Texas Judicial Branch Certification/Legal

Chris - I am THE working-class candidate in the race, so I understand the struggles of working Texans/Americans, and as a 35-yr resident of the same neighborhood (I grew up in what is now TX 32), I understand the culture and am connected to the community. I have two bachelor's degrees (Journalism News/Ed & Political Science), therefore I have been an avid follower of current events since I was a teen, and have plenty of experience deciphering through misinformation, propaganda, and spin. The last 24 years of my career has been in an analytic capacity; therefore, I am able to understand numbers and analyze them, and my two terms on my HOA board has given me experience with budgets and working on a legislative body (of sorts). My ten years of working with COSIGN Magazine as Editor in Chief has had me immersed in the arts and in business, as the magazine's focus has been in entrepreneurship. I am well-traveled, as the son of an immigrant, and am able to communicate with and appeal to a wide variety of cultures and people.

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Julie - As an attorney and long-time advocate for civil and workers' rights, I have strong expertise in law and policy. I am the only elected official running for this office in a crowded primary. I was on the board of HRC for twelve years and co-chaired their public policy committee for four years which oversaw all political activities for the organization. Last, I am the only candidate who has authored and passed legislation as well as directly defeated anti-LGBTQ+ legislation.

**Question 7: Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?**

Jan - I want to urge a transition from fossil fuels to sustainable, renewable energy sources as quickly and completely as possible. I'll also be a strong voice urging gun safety legislation, codifying Roe v. Wade, and passing the John Lewis Voting Rights Act.

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Brian - In addition to establishing a district office that will provide excellent constituent services to residents of the 32nd district, I will focus on the following priorities:

Healthcare access and affordability - As a doctor, I sought a career working in safety-net hospitals so I could serve those most in need. I saw firsthand what the lack of access to routine and preventative healthcare means for Americans. In 2022, I worked with Democratic leaders in Washington on legislation to help bolster the healthcare workforce, improve diversity in clinical trials, and increase accessibility to affordable healthcare. I also worked on federal legislation related to mental health reform, reproductive rights, Medicare, Medicaid, and more. Unfortunately, healthcare access is still out of reach for the millions of uninsured. And in Texas, our healthcare outcomes are some of the worst in the nation. In 2021, nearly 20% of Texans were uninsured, and Texas children were more than twice as likely as children in other states to be uninsured. Texas also ranks #49 for women's healthcare. We need to improve upon the ACA by creating a public option that will improve access and increase competition in the marketplace. We can lower the price of prescription drugs by allowing for reimportation from Canada and implementing patent reform.

Gun violence Prevention - As a trauma surgeon, I've seen firsthand the devastating toll of gun violence on patients, communities, and our country. I've also trained the next generation of surgeons who will treat victims and survivors of gun violence, and published peer-reviewed research about solutions. And in 2022, I helped Democratic leaders write and pass the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act. That landmark bill extended background checks for gun purchasers under 21, provided funding for state red flag laws and community violence intervention programs, and partially closed the "boyfriend loophole." This was an important first step to promote gun safety, but we have more work to do.

Abortion access - One of the most dire threats our state faces is the denial of reproductive health rights held by Texas women for nearly 50 years. Pregnant people have the right to make decisions about their health alongside their families with the guidance of their doctors – without the interference of politicians. I've operated on women facing death due to reproductive emergencies, and it is unacceptable any person would be denied life-saving care. It's equally unacceptable that Texas women no longer have the freedom to make their own reproductive healthcare choices. In Congress, I will defend against attempts to deny Texas women the basic human right of bodily autonomy, and fight to restore what was

taken away by the extreme Dobbs v. Jackson Supreme Court decision. Abortion is healthcare, and we must restore the protections of Roe v. Wade.

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Callie - As the Representative for District 32, it will be my responsibility to serve as an advocate for the views and needs of my constituents as well as a steward of national interests. I will do this by introducing or supporting legislation that achieves the following goals:

Access to medical care for everyone/Abortion access & reproductive justice for all/supports climate action now/guarantee rights and protections for Transgender and LGBTQ+ individuals/eliminates the burdens of student loan debt and helps hard-working families put food on the table and a roof over their head/ending gun violence/provides affordable housing for all.

As a Representative, it will also be my responsibility to listen to my constituents and bring attention to issues of local and national importance that impact my constituents. For example, it would be my responsibility as the Representative of District 32 to stand against human rights violations and genocide.

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Justin - When afforded the great opportunity be elected, my plans include fighting for STRONG comprehensive Anti-Discrimination legislation, police and criminal justice reform, healthcare accessibility, combating gun violence, and community engagement. Through these actions, I aim to create a more inclusive, equitable society that is safe where the rights and dignity of every individual, particularly those in the LGBTQ+ community are upheld.

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Zachariah - Once elected one of my main goals is to fight for equality and fairness for the LGBTQ+ community.

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Chris - Every vote I take will be through the lens of "Will this benefit working people in my district and beyond?" I will take on the institutional investors that are buying up the housing market and price gouging people into financial distress (up to and including homelessness), and other corporations that continue to price gouge on groceries and essential goods (quite often these are the same culprits that are involved with the housing monopoly).

I will stand against the Military Industrial Complex and their lobbyists and will oppose funding of war, unless we are directly (and provably) attacked. That means cutting off Ukraine proxy war funding, and Israel genocide funding. I will publicly shame those that are complicit, from my platform as a US Representative. I will vote for increased minimum wages to a living wage, and if need be will support a subsidizing of small business wages to help them compete with giant corporations who will have no difficulty meeting the living wage standard. I'll support lifting the social security tax cap to solidify the system. I will vote for term limits, I will support a single payer system, I stand for anti-censorship, and will stand against big tech, big pharma, and all the powerful lobbies.

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Julie - I plan to work on codifying Roe and the Equality Act into federal law, and build on my experience with Medicaid expansion legislation, as well as getting to work at solving the Social Security loophole for Texas educators.

**Question 8: If elected how will you recruit, retain, and create a supportive environment for LGBTQ+ staff and affirming staff?**

Jan - I'll connect with SDD and Carrollton Pride for referral suggestions. As I said earlier, I treat everyone with equal respect and dignity, so that will not require additional steps.

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Brian - It will be my goal to have a congressional staff that is reflective of the 32nd district. I have put this in practice on my campaign by offering fair compensation and full health coverage. I will actively seek the input of stakeholder groups and communities to ensure we are sourcing top talent from diverse backgrounds. I hold my staff to high standards and will provide support through dedicated DEI trainings. I have zero tolerance for harassment.

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Callie - Throughout my career and in my leadership roles at various organizations, I have always sought to create an inclusive and welcoming environment for those who are working with me. This begins with listening and understanding

others' experiences and believing and trusting their expression of their lived experience, meeting people where they are, and fostering an environment where people of all backgrounds feel welcome to share their full intersectional identity.

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Justin - If elected, my commitment to fostering an inclusive workplace will be paramount. I plan to actively recruit LGBTQ+ individuals through targeted outreach and collaborations with relevant organizations. In our office, continuous inclusivity training and strong anti-discrimination policies will be the norm, ensuring a supportive environment for all staff. I'll encourage open dialogue and celebrate LGBTQ+ contributions, creating a culture where every team member feels valued. Leading by example, I will be an outspoken ally, advocating for LGBTQ+ rights in my legislative work, ensuring our office is not just a workplace, but a community of respect and affirmation.

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Zachariah - Once elected I will recruit from within the LGBTQ+ community and ensure that someone on my staff is LGBTQ+.

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Chris - I will not discriminate against any applicant, because I believe in diverse voices.

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Julie - My staff in district and in Austin has included members of the LGBTQ+ community since I was elected in 2018. I will bring this spirit of inclusion to our office in D.C. and in TX 32 as well.

**Question 9: Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?**

Jan - Absolutely.

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Brian - Yes

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Callie - Yes. Definitely! And not just the LGBTQ+ community. I believe it is critically important to provide channels for open communication between my constituents and me that support all the intersectional identities that create our full community.

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Justin - Yes.

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Zachariah - Absolutely!

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Chris - I don't oppose the idea, but since the LGBTQ community is not a monolith, I would need some input as to how this can be accomplished, or how it has been accomplished. I lean more toward having an open and inviting space where anyone in the community feels welcome to come talk about their concerns.

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Julie - I am endorsed by HRC, Equality PAC, and LPAC and will continue to work and liaison with members of the grassroots or institutions of our community.

**Question 10: What non-discrimination policies will you support for employment and protection of LGBTQ+ constituents based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression?**

Jan - Sexual orientation, gender identity and expression should be protected classes in employment law and in all areas of life.

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Brian - I support passage of the Equality Act, the Customer Non-Discrimination Act, the Fair and Equal Housing Act, the Safe Schools Improvement Act, and future legislation that addresses discrimination and targeting of the LGBTQ community.

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Callie - I wholeheartedly support passing the Equality Act, which would provide full federal employment discrimination protection to LGBTQ+ individuals, the same rights and protections under the law as provided to all other protected classes. Additionally, I would support efforts to pass local non-discrimination ordinances and more localized



administrative recourse for discrimination of all sorts within Texas because, in my experience representing clients, these local protections often provide for a quicker, more direct path to resolving discrimination than federal suits.

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Justin - As an elected official, I will be a staunch advocate for robust non-discrimination policies that safeguard LGBTQ+ constituents in all facets of public life. My agenda will include expanding existing laws to explicitly protect against discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression. This will encompass employment practices, access to healthcare, including gender-affirming treatments, and public accommodations. I'll also promote mandatory educational initiatives in workplaces and public institutions to foster a deeper understanding and respect for LGBTQ+ issues. Ensuring these protections are recognized and enforced at the federal level will be a key focus, striving for a society where equality and dignity for the LGBTQ+ community are not just ideals, but lived realities.

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Zachariah - All non-discrimination policies.

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Chris - I believe in equal protection under the law, and anti-discriminatory behaviors by the govt and employers.

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Julie - In my experience as a legislator, I have blocked and stopped hundreds of anti-equality bills, most notable stopping the "Chick Fil-A" bill in 2019 which earned me Freshman of the Year. I am publicly in support of passing the National Equality Act and my campaign for TX 32 is endorsed by Equality PAC. I have been a staunch defender of the LGBTQ+ community in the Texas legislature, and will continue to be a leader for our community in Congress.

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#### **Question 11: How can congress play a role to get Roe v. Wade codified into law?**

Jan - My understanding is that if Congress were to specifically pass a law declaring Roe v. Wade to be a federal law, that would remove the uncertainty around it and remove it from the current state by state mess we have.

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Brian - As a doctor, I believe that every patient deserves the best possible care - without judgement. One of the most dire threats our state faces is the denial of reproductive health rights held by Texas women for nearly 50 years. Pregnant people have the right to make decisions about their health alongside their families with the guidance of their doctors – without the interference of politicians. I've operated on women facing death due to reproductive emergencies, and it is unacceptable any person would be denied life-saving care. It's equally unacceptable that Texas women no longer have the freedom to make their own reproductive healthcare choices.

In Congress, I will defend against attempts to deny Texas women the basic human right of bodily autonomy, and fight to restore what was taken away by the extreme Dobbs v. Jackson Supreme Court decision. Abortion is healthcare, and we must restore the protections of Roe v. Wade by passing the Women's Health Protection Act.

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Callie - Post Dobbs, it is critical that we finally enact legislation that guarantees the rights of individuals to make medical decisions around their own bodies, including the right to an abortion. This is an issue on which there is broad support nationally on both sides of the aisle. We must use every mechanism we can to apply pressure on the Senate to eliminate the filibuster and enshrine a right to access an abortion into federal law.

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Justin - In the quest to codify Roe v. Wade, Congress plays a critical role. The journey starts with drafting legislation that firmly enshrines abortion rights, a task requiring careful legal crafting to reflect Roe's principles. Once introduced, this bill must navigate the complex waters of congressional committees, where it's refined through expert input and bipartisan deliberation. In the House and Senate, vigorous debates will shape the bill's final form, demanding a balanced blend of advocacy and diplomacy from lawmakers. The bill's journey culminates in presidential approval, but Congress's work doesn't end there. Anticipating potential constitutional challenges, the legislation must be robust enough to withstand judicial scrutiny. Furthermore, Congress must remain vigilant, ensuring the law's effective implementation and safeguarding these rights against future political shifts. Through this process, Congress has the power to transform a pivotal judicial precedent into a lasting pillar of American law, securing reproductive rights for generations to come.

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Zachariah - To get Roe v. Wade codified into law, Congress can take several steps: 1. Introduce and pass legislation: Members of Congress can introduce bills that aim to codify the principles of Roe v. Wade into law. This legislation would establish the right to access abortion services and protect reproductive rights. This may involve engaging in discussions and negotiations with members from both sides of the aisle to find common ground and secure the necessary votes for passage.

2. Overcome procedural hurdles: Congress may face procedural hurdles, such as filibusters or the need for a supermajority in the Senate. Lawmakers can explore options to overcome these hurdles, such as invoking cloture to end a filibuster or seeking to change Senate rules to require a simple majority for passage.

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Chris - When Dems had a super majority, they neglected to codify Roe, so unless there is another super majority, and there is the actual will to do so (I do support the codification of Roe), that would likely be the only way.

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Julie - Congress must recommit to passing the Ensuring Access to Abortion Act (EAAA) and make it a violation of federal law for any person (including law enforcement) to criminalize or impose a penalty on a pregnant person who seeks to travel between states to obtain an abortion, as well as any organization or medical provider who assists. Additionally, all 50 states have at least one military base. Congress could ensure that abortion access was available on every federal base and include traveling to those bases in the access to abortion travel provision of EAAA.

**Question 12: How would you lead or support efforts to provide better funding for health care and better health care options for all Texas residents?**

Jan - I am an advocate for Medicare For All. It is unconscionable that the U.S. is the only major Western nation that does not guarantee healthcare for all.

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Brian - As a doctor, I sought a career working in safety-net hospitals so I could serve those most in need. I saw firsthand what the lack of access to routine and preventative healthcare means for Americans. In 2022, I worked with Democratic leaders in Washington on legislation to help bolster the healthcare workforce, improve diversity in clinical trials, and increase accessibility to affordable healthcare. I also worked on federal legislation related to mental health reform, reproductive rights, Medicare, Medicaid, and more.

Unfortunately, healthcare access is still out of reach for the millions of uninsured. And in Texas, our healthcare outcomes are some of the worst in the nation. In 2021, nearly 20% of Texans were uninsured, and Texas children were more than twice as likely as children in other states to be uninsured. Texas also ranks #49 for women's healthcare.

In Congress, I will work to: Offer a public option for health insurance so Americans will have expanded access and more choices on the Marketplace, lowering prices for everyone through increased competition, and allow those who like their private plans to keep them.

Lower prescription drug costs: For those lucky enough to receive the care of a doctor, there is still the burden of prescription drug cost. We must allow reimportation of FDA-approved drugs from Canada at lower prices and cap the cost of insulin for all Americans at \$35 per month. We must also hold drug companies accountable and bring generic drugs to market sooner at a fraction of the cost of high-priced brand name drugs, to make pharmaceutical companies put patients over profits. A bipartisan group of Senators is advocating for this reform, and I will support their bill as a member of Congress if given the opportunity.

Incentivize research and development of Orphan Drugs: As a surgeon, I saw far too many parents watch their children suffer with rare conditions for which treatments were either unavailable or extraordinarily expensive. Currently, the FDA does provide grants to pharmaceutical companies who wish to develop drug treatments for rare conditions. However, there's much more we can do to ensure that pharmaceutical companies continue to research treatments and cures for rare conditions, and that those treatments are fairly priced. I will advocate for expanded resources for orphan drug

research and work to increase awareness and support of this vital program in Washington. I will also encourage the government to partner with pharmaceutical companies in efforts to keep those vital treatments on the market.

Advocate for Medicaid expansion: I will fight for the expansion of Medicaid and support legislation that will encourage state legislators to change course in favor of helping millions of Texans' to receive the coverage they need, instead of actively working to take it away. More than 94 million Americans, 28% of the population, were enrolled in Medicaid or CHIP (Children's Health Insurance Program) as of March 2023. Medicaid is not only coverage for low-income Americans, it is also the leading provider for children, mental health services, and long-term care. Unfortunately, 47 states, including Texas, have disenrolled millions from coverage— many due to procedural reasons. 5.5 million people have been disenrolled nationwide as of August 2023. Access to Medicaid and CHIP is critical for many Americans. But in addition to the disenrollment process, Texas continues to fail millions of citizens by refusing to accept federal funding for Medicaid expansion.

Increase transparency for patients in the healthcare system: When patients need lifesaving care, they and their families should be able to instantly get clear pricing and information about their options for care and what it might cost. But insurance companies and corporate hospital systems have made it virtually impossible to get straightforward answers on what patients might pay out of pocket - so they can make more money at Texans' expense. We must crack down on this opaque system which lets patients be taken advantage of, and pass reforms that get Texans the information they deserve when emergencies strike.

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Callie - Even with the Affordable Care Act (ACA), the US ranks last in access to care, equity, administrative efficiency, and healthcare outcomes. As a result, we rank far below all the other countries in overall performance despite vastly higher spending. The obvious solution and my ultimate goal is to move to a single-payer system like "Medicare for All," which would provide access to high-quality healthcare for all Americans. Until such a proposal is fully adopted, I would continue to support the expansion of Medicare and Medicaid. That being said, we must also understand that many of the barriers to affordable healthcare for Texans are created at a state level, and these state-created barriers leave millions of federal dollars on the table rather than in Texans' pockets.

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Justin - As a leader committed to improving healthcare in Texas, my strategy would focus on several key areas. First, I would champion the expansion of Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, significantly increasing healthcare access for low-income Texans. Alongside this, I'd work tirelessly to secure increased state and federal funding for healthcare programs, with a special emphasis on public health initiatives and mental health services. Addressing the healthcare needs in rural areas would be a priority, supporting the development of local clinics and expanding telehealth services. Promoting affordable insurance options would also be crucial. This would involve advocating for policies that incentivize lower-cost plans with comprehensive coverage.

Furthermore, I'd focus on strengthening preventive and primary care, ensuring that all Texans have access to essential health services like screenings and vaccinations. Addressing health disparities, particularly among racial and ethnic minorities, would be an integral part of my agenda. Legislative advocacy, forming public-private partnerships, and collaborating with healthcare professionals and community groups would underpin all these efforts. My goal is to create a more equitable, accessible, and comprehensive healthcare system for every resident in Texas.

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Zachariah - As a previous owner of four medical facilities throughout Texas, here's how I have taken steps to achieve these goals: Regarding the requirement for referral medical providers to disclose their network status prior to services. This would ensure that patients would have the necessary information to make informed decisions about their healthcare and avoid unexpected out-of-network costs.

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Chris - It's difficult since the Republicans block Medicaid expansion. I believe in the federal funding of clinics and the elimination of Medicare shortfalls that require private insurance. I would lead and support via the platform of the office to sway the public through media and social media, and also expose those taking campaign donations from the industry (regardless of party) to inform voters to purge the insurance industry donation recipients.

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Julie - I am the only legislator in Texas House history to get bipartisan support for a Medicaid Expansion bill.

**Question 13: How would you lead or support an effort to establish universal or single payer health care for the United States of America? What improvements, if any, should be made to strengthen the Affordable Care Act?**

Jan - I support Medicare For All. It has been fully researched and is ready to be put into place with a minimum of disruption. Everyone has a right to receive healthcare, and everyone will benefit from having a generally healthier population.

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Brian - I believe that we need to build on the success of the Affordable Care Act by creating a public option for health insurance so Americans will have expanded access and more choices on the Marketplace, lowering prices for everyone through increased competition, and allow those who like their private plans to keep them.

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Callie - I am a supporter of Medicare for All. I would work with colleagues in the House and the Senate, like Rep. Pramila Jayapal and Sen. Bernie Sanders, to continue the push for this much-needed change to our healthcare system.

Short of Medicare for All, we could improve the ACA by expanding the public options provided through Medicare. These public option plans would be part of Medicare and use Medicare providers and reimbursement rates. The plans should have no deductibles and should cover all primary care without copayments. The public option would automatically enroll low-income people without insurance and be available through the ACA marketplace to those not eligible for other public insurance and would even be available as an option to workers with employer-sponsored insurance. Implementation of this expanded public option would still allow private plans to be available in the ACA marketplace as well as from employers.

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Justin - In leading the effort to establish universal or single-payer healthcare in the United States, my approach would be both innovative and pragmatic. Recognizing the complexity of this transition, I would first focus on building a broad coalition of lawmakers, healthcare professionals, and community advocates to create a robust and inclusive plan. This would involve exploring successful models from other countries, adapting them to the unique context of the U.S. healthcare system. In parallel, I would advocate for incremental but significant improvements to the Affordable Care Act (ACA) as a stepping stone towards universal coverage. These improvements would include expanding Medicaid eligibility, increasing subsidies to make insurance more affordable, and introducing a public option to create a competitive and cost-effective alternative to private insurance. By combining a visionary approach to universal healthcare with practical enhancements to the ACA, I aim to create a more equitable, accessible, and efficient healthcare system for all Americans.

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Zachariah - 1. Expand Medicaid coverage/2. Increase subsidies and affordability/3. Enhance marketplace competition/4. Address prescription drug prices/5. Invest in preventive care and public health/6. Strengthen mental health and substance abuse services/7. Improve healthcare infrastructure/8. Enhance consumer protections:

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Chris - I believe the expansion of Medicare to cover all is easiest way to accomplish this, as it is an established system with an already built infrastructure. I believe that subsidizing more low income people would improve the ACA, but we must get the health insurance companies out of healthcare, and the ACA has been supported by these insurance companies, therefore we must look to phase it out in favor of M4A.

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Julie - Congress can amend the Social Security Act to include Medicaid access for all to provide a legal framework for states to expand and help the federal government fund these programs. The Department of Health and Human services would need substantial increases to appropriations to accommodate and govern a new universal system and I would vote for or coauthor all funding requests to do so. Re: ACA, we need expansion on coverage of pre-existing conditions and to raise taxes on business and the top 1% of income earners to subsidize and expand access for families who want to enroll in ACA.

**Question 14: How would you lead or support efforts to ensure the John Lewis Voting Rights Act is enacted?**

Jan - The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act is critical to the preservation of our democracy. It is mainly focused on restoring the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which was substantially weakened when Shelby v. Holder removed the Sect 5 preclearance requirements for states to make changes in their voting procedures. Today the Voting Rights Act is further threatened by cases aiming to gut Section 2, saying that private groups and individuals should not be permitted to bring cases over voting rights. For decades, the majority of cases have been brought by such groups and people.

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Brian - As a veteran, I swore an oath to defend our constitution, and voting rights are under attack in this country. We've seen numerous bills coming out of state legislatures around the country that clearly are intended to make it harder for marginalized communities to access the ballot. I disagree with the Supreme Court's decision to strike section 5 from the VRA and support passage of the John Lewis Voting Rights Act to restore critical provisions that will ensure that the right to vote is protected for all Americans.

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Callie - The right and ability to vote is a cornerstone of our democracy. As a congressional representative, I will ardently support this legislation and others that aim to protect everyone from discrimination in this most basic right and duty.

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Justin - As a civil rights attorney who has represented individuals unjustly prosecuted for voting, I understand the critical importance of protecting voting rights. Now, as a congressional candidate, I am committed to leading the charge to ensure the enactment of the John Lewis Voting Rights Act. My approach will involve leveraging my legal expertise and firsthand experience to advocate vigorously for this legislation. I plan to collaborate closely with fellow lawmakers, civil rights organizations, and community leaders to build a strong, bipartisan coalition in support of the Act. This coalition will be instrumental in raising public awareness about the importance of the Act and in countering misinformation. I will also use my platform to highlight the Act's essential role in combating voter suppression and ensuring fair, accessible elections for all Americans, particularly for marginalized communities. My goal is to honor John Lewis's legacy by enshrining these critical protections into law, ensuring every American's right to vote is safeguarded.

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Zachariah - 1. Co-sponsor and champion the legislation/2. Build bipartisan support/3. Engage with relevant committees/4. Educate fellow lawmakers/5. Mobilize constituents and advocacy groups/6. Utilize media and communication platforms/7. Seek bipartisan compromises/8. Persist and advocate for passage

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Chris - I am a strong supporter of the act and will be a vocal proponent of it passing.

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Julie - As a legislator, I have consistently voted to expand voting access opportunities and participated in the 2021 quorum break to obtain improvements to a terrible voting discrimination bill. I would also vote to pass the most recent version of the John Lewis Voting Rights Act and support any legislation that builds on its principles to modernize pre-clearance standards and strengthen protections against voter discrimination, vote dilution, and gerrymandering.

**Question 15: Did the Build Back Better Act in your opinion do enough to address the nation's needs?**

Jan - When there are big problems, what is accomplished is never enough. Sen. Joe Manchin was a major roadblock to some of the provisions the Biden administration sought, but the package that was passed has made good progress. We are currently very likely to achieve a "soft landing" for the economy following the pandemic. That was considered impossible a year ago.

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Brian - The Build Back Better Act was a historic piece of legislation that came at a time of incredible hardship for our country. I strongly support its provisions for universal Pre-K, increased funding for childcare and home care, rental assistance, funding for clean energy and climate projects, and expanded Medicare coverage, among many other things. I am glad that many of these things were included upon final passage of the Inflation Reduction Act and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, however many important elements were lost in negotiations. In particular, the sunset of the expanded Child Tax Credit has directly impacted millions of families and left far too many children back below the poverty line. I support reinstatement of the Child Tax Credit to post-pandemic levels.

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Callie - Build Back Better, as passed (the Inflation Reduction Act), was a historic achievement and provides a great start to reducing the cost of prescription drugs, a short extension of ACA subsidies, and investment in climate solutions, but it still needs expansion. For example, even though the Inflation Reduction Act was the largest investment in combating climate change in U.S. history, experts have already confirmed it is not enough to reduce carbon output in time to reach the nation's goal of net zero emissions economy-wide by no later than 2050. Additionally, the slimmed-down Build Back Better that passed no longer included the extension of the expanded Child Tax Credit. The expanded Child Tax Credit programs that were implemented as part of the American Rescue Plan Act lifted more than 2.7 million children out of poverty, all while improving overall economic performance.

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Justin - I view the Build Back Better Act with a balanced perspective. On one hand, it admirably addressed key issues like climate change, healthcare affordability, and education - crucial steps towards a sustainable and inclusive future. Its efforts in reducing prescription drug costs and expanding renewable energy initiatives are particularly praiseworthy. However, I believe the Act fell short in fully tackling the breadth of our nation's challenges. It missed significant opportunities to deepen its impact in areas like affordable housing, comprehensive healthcare reform, and robust support for low-income families. While it laid a foundation for economic recovery and job creation, a more focused approach on systemic inequalities was needed to ensure equitable benefits for all communities, especially those disproportionately affected by the pandemic. As a congressional representative, I would strive to build on the strengths of this Act, while pushing for more ambitious policies that address these gaps, ensuring a more inclusive and robust response to our nation's diverse needs.

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Zachariah - I agree that the Build Back Better Act addresses many of the nation's needs, but there is always room for improvement. 1. Strengthening climate change provisions/2. Expanding healthcare access and affordability/3. Investing more in infrastructure and job creation/4. Supporting education and workforce development/5. Addressing income inequality and supporting working families: Income inequality remains a significant challenge in our society. I would work to strengthen provisions within the Build Back Better Act that address this issue, such as expanding the Child Tax Credit, increasing the minimum wage, and implementing policies that support working families. By prioritizing economic equity, we can create a more inclusive and just society/6. Advancing racial and social justice: The Build Back Better Act should incorporate provisions that advance racial and social justice/7. Fostering innovation and technological advancements: In a rapidly changing world, it is crucial to foster innovation and technological advancements.

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Chris - No, we still have failing infrastructure (water in many municipalities is undrinkable), it opened up drilling on federal lands, and it was greatly reduced in scope in its final form.

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Julie - It was a great step forward but no it did not full address the decades of stagnation before it or the future that lies ahead. Texas is expected to reach 50 million people in the next few decades so we must continue to demand more infrastructure investment and high-speed rail or transportation funds. The Texas economy is the 8th largest economy in the world and requires massive investment to support national and foreign needs.

**Question 16: Do you or do you not support ending the filibuster?**

Jan - I support ending it. It is a mystery to me how when the "score" is 59-41, the winner is the side with 41 votes. That's not right. As a minimum first step, it should return to a "talking" filibuster that requires substantial effort on the part of the filibustering party.

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Brian - I support ending the filibuster.

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Callie - Yes, I support ending the filibuster. The filibuster prevented Democrats from passing voting rights, immigration reform, labor rights, abortion rights, and police reform legislation and ensured that the gun control legislation passed in the wake of mass shootings in Buffalo and Uvalde was significantly watered down. Unless the filibuster is eliminated, a minority of Senators representing an even smaller minority of Americans will continue to block progress.

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Justin - I do support ending the filibuster. It has prohibited progress in this country for far too long.

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Zachariah - 1. Reforming the filibuster rule/2. Implementing a talking filibuster/3. Lowering the threshold for cloture/  
4. Carving out exceptions for certain types of legislation/5. Establishing a "talking filibuster" threshold

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Chris - I believe it has been used in bad faith over the past 15 years or so, I'm not wholly against its demise, but worry that, especially with the strides Republicans have made in recent elections, may be the only thing stopping wild and egregious legislation being enacted. I do believe that if you're going to filibuster, you have to actually talk for hours on end and filibuster in the traditional sense.

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Julie - Filibuster reform would help the Senate to enact more legislation to protect abortion access and voting rights.

**Question 17: What specific ideas do you have and/or what current legislation would you support to strengthen and grow the US economy?**

Jan - I would advocate for what I call an "income is income" approach to income tax. We currently have a completely separate set of rules for capital gains income, which is typically earned by high-income taxpayers. The rates are about half the rates paid by workers earning a paycheck that is considered "ordinary" income. That's how it happens that Warren Buffett's secretary pays a higher rate of taxes than Buffett himself. That's clearly not right.

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Brian - As a member of Congress, I will focus on increasing opportunity while finding common-sense ways to bring down costs. We need to continue to invest in our communities and make it easier for Texans to become entrepreneurs and small business owners who create good jobs with fair wages. This requires investing in infrastructure like roads and broadband access and advocating for programs that help Texans raise their families without undue burden. We also need to make sure that young Texans can afford to stay here in Texas by ensuring housing prices are affordable, expanding access to childcare, and keeping costs low. In Congress, I will fight for: A \$15 minimum wage to ensure all Americans are paid fairly for their work with a wage on which they can build the lives and families they desire.

Investments to strengthen Texas' infrastructure - including roads, bridges, air, rail, and broadband access in rural communities - in order to improve quality of life and increase access to entrepreneurship for all Texans. Cracking down on corporate price gouging and holding companies accountable when they take advantage of Texans so we can lower prices. Protections for Labor Unions across North Texas – including passing the Protecting the Right to Organize Act so that they can continue to improve the working conditions and lives of their members. Labor Unions are vital in the 32nd district and I will stand up against any attacks by Republicans to weaken our Unions.

Continued investments in high-tech manufacturing through measures like the CHIPS Act, in order to bring even more high-quality jobs and industry to Texas. Programs that make high-quality childcare available and affordable for working parents. Paid family and medical leave so that parents do not have to choose between their jobs and ensuring their children have safe and loving care. Investments in apprenticeship and worker training programs to help Texans gain skills in growth industries. Investments in affordable housing so that Texans can afford to live in their communities without breaking the bank, as well as measures fighting discrimination in the housing process.

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Callie - We must continue to invest in jobs in the U.S., including those that reduce reliance on foreign sources of energy and increase supply chain diversity for vital products like semiconductors by supporting the growth of the domestic manufacturing industry for these products. We should also invest in building out a more robust system of technical schools and provide more affordable access to college level education. Additionally, we should legalize and tax marijuana and sex work.

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Justin - As a co-founder of a tech startup and the offspring of serial entrepreneurs, my approach to economic growth combines innovation and practical support for entrepreneurship. I advocate for policies that bolster access to capital and provide tax relief for startups, especially in burgeoning sectors like technology. Recognizing the transformative power of digital and traditional infrastructure investment, I see this as a key driver for economic expansion and job creation.

Emphasizing the importance of the green economy, I support initiatives in renewable energy that foster sustainable development and open new markets. My strategy includes bridging the education-workforce gap, ensuring that our workforce is equipped for the technological demands of the future.

Drawing from my experience in the tech industry, I also see significant opportunities in healthcare innovation, where technology can enhance efficiency and accessibility. Grounded in my family's entrepreneurial spirit, I am committed to policies that promote inclusivity and reduce income disparity, ensuring a robust economy that offers opportunities for all. My vision is to create an environment where technological advancement and economic policy work hand in hand to build a resilient, forward-thinking economy.

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Zachariah - Gun Safety Act: This Bill would require all gun owners to be licensed similar to a fishing license, but more in-depth with a mandatory mental health screening. Now more than ever, mental health awareness is critical when it comes to gun safety. Mental health issues could affect one's cognitive and decision-making process.

Many states, including Texas do not require a license to carry a gun. It's my belief that if we are required to have a license to drive a car, which can also be a deadly weapon. We also need a license to carry a gun. Along with the fore mentioned proposals, I will propose a federal law that any person desiring to carry a gun must be properly licensed. Coupled with a "National No Gun Sales List" like the "National No Fly List".

#### Healthcare Rx Prescription Act

This Bill will take several actions that will reduce healthcare costs and reform prescription drug costs for senior citizens.

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Chris - Using Sherman Anti-Trust legislation on the Blackrocks of the world, to eliminate the corporate capture of elected officials I would support the end of Citizens United, and publicly fund elections to get big business interests out of the way so we can proceed with actual bills that would improve the economy. I favor a living wage, adopting the PRO Act to improve wages in that manner as well (as when Union wages increase, all wages increase). I would lift sanctions on all countries in the Western hemisphere (none are a threat to us) to open up markets for American goods.

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Julie - Making education and workforce development a priority for investment and passing laws to prevent students from being saddled with debt would help many young Americans purchase homes and avoid bankruptcy. I would support reforms to the financial sector to regulate reckless speculation, and prevent monopolies. I also strongly support increasing funding to USCIS to provide a path to immigration that works for immigrant workers and our states.

#### **Question 18: What could congress do to improve response and preparation for the next pandemic?**

Jan - The book "Premonition," by Michael Lewis, is a terrific presentation of this. Lewis points out that the biggest villain during the Covid-19 pandemic was the indifference and lack of communication among various governmental agencies that should have been acting. The Centers for Disease Control was lambasted, with the suggestion that it should be renamed the Center for Disease Information. Their focus was on not making any announcements that could have any possibility of error, so they basically sat back and did nothing while the scientists were painfully aware of the unfolding disaster. Congress could streamline the structure of those agencies.

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Brian - We have all seen how quickly the world can change. I was tasked with leading the COVID response team at my hospital, and it was laid bare to me just how vulnerable we are to this type of disease. While we can never anticipate every variable in a complex and rapidly changing event like a pandemic, there are a few key things we need to do to be prepared for the future. Firstly, we need to restore trust in our public health institutions. President Trump's lies and fear-mongering around the pandemic response planted a seed deep in the American mindset that has led to broad based distrust of experts. We also need to improve regular healthcare access for our vulnerable populations. We saw how Black and Brown communities were disproportionately impacted by COVID because they were already among the sickest and least-resourced in our communities. And we must improve our supply chain and end-to-end capabilities so we aren't forced into the same rationing and long time frames as we were in 2020. We must be able to rapidly scale up



during a pandemic (e.g. surge health worker capacity, pre-positioning health system infrastructure and supplies, potential deployment plans, etc.).

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Callie - Pass legislation aimed at improving the supply chain diversity for key medical equipment and Personal Protective Equipment. Study our response to COVID-19 and determine what worked well and what did not, where our pain points were in terms of roll-out of pandemic relief, listen to experts and on-the-ground healthcare workers, and develop a strategic plan in partnership with each of the key stakeholders.

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Justin - As someone whose parents owned a home health company and who lost their father to cancer early in the COVID pandemic, I have a deeply personal and informed perspective on pandemic preparedness and response. My experience has shown me the critical importance of robust public health infrastructure, especially in supporting vulnerable populations like those needing home health care. In Congress, I would advocate for comprehensive disease surveillance systems, utilizing advanced technology for early detection and rapid response. A priority would be ensuring a well-stocked national reserve of essential medical supplies to prevent shortages. My focus would also extend to enhancing the resilience of our healthcare system, including support for home health services and hospice care, areas often overlooked in crisis planning. Additionally, I see the need for clear and compassionate public health communication, something acutely felt during my father's illness. Updating public health emergency laws and ensuring economic support mechanisms for affected individuals and businesses would also be key components of my approach. Drawing from my personal experience and professional background, I aim to champion policies that improve the U.S.'s readiness for future pandemics, focusing on both healthcare needs and the human elements of such crises.

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Zachariah - 1. Increase funding for public health agencies/2. Strengthen international cooperation and coordination/ 3. Improve early warning systems/4. Enhance vaccine research & development/5. Strengthen healthcare infrastructure/ 6. Improve pandemic preparedness planning/7. Enhance data sharing and interoperability/8. Support public health education and awareness:

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Chris - End all gain of function research and prosecute anyone circumventing these bans. I believe that taking care of workers and small businesses like Europe did will minimize the financial impact of the next pandemic, and also actually follow the science when it comes to a response (total lockdowns are not the solution, and we have evidence of this) and allow thorough testing of all options for treatment rather than stick to the most profitable-to-Big-Pharma solutions.

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Julie - 1) Improve and participate in more global monitoring programs for disease and public health. 2) Increase funding and oversight to the National Health Security Strategy and the Pandemic and All Hazards Preparedness Act

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**Question 19: 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?**

Jan - Yes.

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Brian - Yes, I would support these requirements in the House. I have lead DEI programs and am a sought after speaker in this space. I am eager to bring my background and experience to Congress to create safer and more equitable offices.

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Callie - Yes.

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Justin - Yes. I would be lead and be a loudly vocal supporter of this legislation.

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Zachariah - Yes

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Chris - I don't see how Congress and corporate America should be different in this, so yes.

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Julie - Yes, my current state staff and myself participate in EEOC and Sexual Harassment trainings and my campaign has a guidebook and procedures for ensuring inclusivity and protection for workers and volunteers.

**Question 20: 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)**

Jan - DACA recipients have been in the U.S. for decades, and they have been regularly screened for renewals. They should be eligible for citizenship NOW.

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Brian - As an Air Force Veteran and a Texan, I recognize it is critical we secure our borders. But we can keep our communities safe and provide opportunities for hardworking people to come here legally and strengthen our communities in accordance with our values as a country—these goals are not mutually exclusive. Ours is a nation of immigrants, and we must pass comprehensive immigration reform that reflects our values and promotes our national security. I'll work to empower border agencies to humanely and effectively secure our borders, while supporting a pathway to citizenship for those who have come here, paid their taxes, followed the rules, and enriched our nation. And I'll fight hard to pass the Dream Act and protect DACA recipients who were brought here as kids and know no other country than the one they've grown up in and worked to strengthen.

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Callie - I support passing legislation like the DREAM Act and/or the widely supported American Dream and Promise Act, which would provide a path to citizenship for 3-4 million Dreamers and Temporary Protective Status (TPS) holders. Texas is home to more than 100,000 DACA recipients, and it is critical we provide a path to citizenship for these individuals and others who have been living and working in our state and our country for years.

Additionally, we need to work toward immigration reform that addresses the dysfunction and brutality of the current immigration enforcement system and build a fair and humane system that respects all people, regardless of race, religion, or birthplace. This includes advancing legislation like the New Way Forward Act, which takes steps to separate U.S. immigration laws from the criminal legal system by repealing harsh and outdated 1996 immigration laws and disentangling local police from federal immigration.

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Justin - Raised in a community vibrant with immigrant stories, I've always been moved by the determination and dreams of young immigrants. Their journey, their struggles, and their unwavering hope in the face of uncertainty have deeply touched me. As a candidate for Congress, my commitment to the DREAM Act is deeply personal. I plan to tirelessly advocate for this vital legislation, not just as a political agenda, but as a moral imperative to do right by these young people who embody the spirit of America. My efforts will focus on building bipartisan support and ensuring that the voices of Dreamers themselves are at the forefront of this discussion. These young individuals, who have grown up and studied here, deserve the chance to live, work, and contribute to our nation without fear. Their stories aren't just narratives of immigration; they are testimonies of the American dream. In Congress, I'll fight passionately to turn the promise of the DREAM Act into a reality, championing a future that honors the potential and rights of every young person who calls America home.

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Zachariah - I would propose a bill that aims to provide a pathway to citizenship for any minor child brought to the United States. 1. Building bipartisan support/2. Educating fellow lawmakers/3. Mobilizing stakeholders/4. Crafting a bill: I would work diligently to draft a comprehensive immigration reform bill that includes provisions for the DREAM Act. This bill would outline a clear pathway to citizenship for undocumented minors, ensuring that they have the opportunity to contribute fully to our society and pursue their dreams. The bill would also address other aspects of immigration reform, such as border security, visa reforms, and family reunification/5. Engaging with the public/6. Building coalitions

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Chris - It has my vote

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Julie - I would vote for and co-sponsor the next introduction of the DREAM Act to keep all of the great young people who call the U.S. home with us where they belong. My number one priority is to call for more funding to greatly increase the

number of USCIS workers to process visa, green card, citizenship, and asylum applications. I would also champion the cause and partnerships for immigration relief to families and migrant workers who are suffering while we seek long-lasting solutions and expanded infrastructure for a revitalized immigration system. As a member of the Texas delegation, I will partner with anyone looking to reform the currently broken and inhumane system.

## **B. Temporary Protected Status (TPS)**

Jan - I favor TPS. People who are here in the country trying to make a better life for themselves and their families deserve that protection. The U.S. needs their labor, and if they pass a background check that determines they do not represent a risk, they should be welcomed and allowed to work.

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Brian - I will oppose efforts to dismantle or undermine the Temporary Protected Status program. TPS recipients come to this country seeking a better life and they are important members of our community.

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Callie - I support passing legislation like the DREAM Act and/or the widely supported American Dream and Promise Act, which would provide a path to citizenship for 3-4 million Dreamers and Temporary Protective Status (TPS) holders. Texas is home to more than 100,000 DACA recipients, and it is critical we provide a path to citizenship for these individuals and others who have been living and working in our state and our country for years.

Additionally, we need to work toward immigration reform that addresses the dysfunction and brutality of the current immigration enforcement system and build a fair and humane system that respects all people, regardless of race, religion, or birthplace. This includes advancing legislation like the New Way Forward Act, which takes steps to separate U.S. immigration laws from the criminal legal system by repealing harsh and outdated 1996 immigration laws and disentangling local police from federal immigration.

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Justin - In my community, I've witnessed the profound impact of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) on families seeking refuge from life-threatening conditions in their home countries. These individuals, who have built lives, careers, and families here, contribute immeasurably to the social and economic fabric of our society. As a congressional candidate, I am committed to ensuring that TPS recipients are treated with the dignity and respect they deserve. My approach will be to work towards legislation that not only safeguards their status but also provides a pathway to permanent residency. The uncertain nature of TPS, with its constant need for renewal, leaves many in a state of perpetual anxiety. In Congress, I will advocate for a more stable and humane policy, one that recognizes the basic rights and contributions of TPS recipients. This issue is more than a matter of immigration policy; it's about upholding our values as a nation that offers sanctuary and opportunity. By ensuring the security and stability of TPS recipients, we reaffirm our commitment to being a beacon of hope and a land of new beginnings.

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Zachariah - 1. Understanding the unique circumstances/2. Research and analysis/3. Collaboration with stakeholders  
4. Drafting legislation: Based on research and input from stakeholders, I would draft legislation that integrates TPS provisions into the DREAM Act. This legislation would outline eligibility criteria, application processes, and the duration of TPS protection for eligible undocumented minors. It would also include provisions for work authorization and access to essential services during the TPS period/5. Building bipartisan support/6. Educating fellow lawmakers/7. Mobilizing public support/8. Working towards passage

By incorporating Temporary Protected Status provisions into the DREAM Act, I would aim to provide temporary relief and protection for eligible undocumented minors who have grown up in the United States, ensuring that they can live and work in the country without fear of deportation.

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Chris - It has my vote

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Julie - See answer about USCIS funding above. Congress can allocate resources to ensure that government agencies have the necessary funding to administer and support TPS programs effectively. Adequate funding and more staff will help

streamline the application process and provide necessary services to asylum seekers. I will also support bills to extend TPS for certain countries, and to create a pathway to permanent residency to beneficiaries

**Question 21: What are your ideas to respond to evidence of climate change?**

Jan - We must transition from fossil fuels to sustainable, renewable energy sources as quickly and as completely as possible. This is not a political game. The stakes are too high to do anything other than put all hands on deck to advance solutions. No more subsidies to fossil fuel companies. Invest in the research and development to improve the reliability and accessibility of renewables.

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Brian - We owe it to our children and our communities to slow the effects of human-caused climate change. In addition to the clear and present danger of climate change on our coastal communities as sea levels rise, and on the southern part of the US as summers get hotter, climate change has a disparate impact on our communities of color. People of color are more likely to live in polluted areas and face hazards that negatively affect their health outcomes. As a Representative in Congress, I will promote measures to continue expanding Texas' clean energy economy and will work to protect Dallas residents most affected by climate change. Fighting climate change and its effects on Texans is not only a long-term imperative - it can be a transformational economic opportunity spurring the creation of new jobs and new businesses that can raise wages and stable careers for our communities.

As a member of Congress, I will: Support continued investment in Texas' already impressive clean energy economy in order to make it the most innovative and productive in the world. Investing further in clean energy will create new jobs, raise existing wages, and increase our resiliency to the effects of climate change while boosting energy security. Reduce individuals' and organizations' barriers to entry in the clean energy economy - investing in job training & CTE programs, making it easier for entrepreneurs to start clean energy businesses, and support research and development efforts that can spur clean energy advances. Invest in cooling centers, emergency resources, and the local organizations that will be increasingly important for Dallas citizens in the years to come as our summers get even hotter.

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Callie - Texas is already leading the way in green energy production, and we must continue to work toward a greener future and switch to renewable energy sources. I support government work programs like the Green New Deal that would provide increased job opportunities and help reduce American reliance on fossil fuels. Beyond the dollars already allocated in the Inflation Reduction Act (the most significant investment in climate solutions in our country's history), I would seek additional federal funding to support Texas infrastructure projects like railroads and high-efficiency electric lines to get power from where it's generated to where it's needed. Additionally, we must use federal funding to incentivize cities and state governments to focus current and future development on public transportation and reduce reliance on cars. Finally, Texas cities rank near the worst in terms of time spent commuting per day; therefore, to reduce emissions, we must invest in affordable housing plans that allow people to live where they work, reducing the need for long commutes.

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Justin - Leveraging my engagement with the BMW Foundation World Responsible Leaders Network and our commitment to the UN's 2030 Sustainability Goals, I bring a unique global perspective to the pressing issue of climate change. In Congress, I intend to champion forward-thinking and science-based climate policies, focusing on a swift transition to renewable energy and significant reductions in carbon emissions. Recognizing the global nature of this challenge, my approach includes fostering international collaboration and supporting innovative green technologies. I will advocate for economic incentives that encourage businesses to adopt sustainable practices, and emphasize the importance of investing in climate research. In all these endeavors, I am committed to ensuring that our response to climate change is inclusive and considers the impacts on vulnerable populations. My aim is to align national policy with global sustainability efforts, paving the way for a future that is both environmentally sound and equitable, reflecting our shared responsibility to protect our planet for future generations.

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Zachariah - 1. Transition to clean and renewable energy/2. Advocate for stringent emissions reduction measures and regulations/3. Invest in sustainable transportation/4. Protect and restore natural ecosystems/5. Support climate adaptation and resilience/6. Promote international cooperation

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Chris - End wars of choice, the US military, if it were a nation state, would be the 46th largest polluting nation in the world. I believe in a top down method where the federal govt leads the way as opposed to implementing climate change resolutions on the masses.

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Julie - Allocate substantial funding for research and development of new technologies that can help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Appropriations would include investments in renewable energy technologies, carbon capture and storage, and sustainable agriculture practices. We must also continue to monitor, enforce and build on current emissions standards. I would support bills that incentivize the development and use of renewable energy sources such as wind, solar, and hydropower. This may involve tax credits, subsidies, or other financial incentives for clean energy projects.

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**Question 22: 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?**

Jan - No

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Brian - No answer provided to this question

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Callie - No.

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Justin - My past and background has been comprehensively included in each of my answers to the previous questions. The grief I experienced from my brothers' suicide is the primary driver for the community work I have been engaged in for a decade. Empathy is typically an unfortunate gift borne from suffering. Fate gave me this gift. I would rather return it, if it meant I got my brother back, but since I can't, I have sought to share this gift with my community. My goal, in an odd way, has been to help people in their time of need to assist them in avoiding the type of suffering I have felt in my life. It has been my calling and I hope to amplify this when in office.

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Zachariah - No

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Chris - No

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Julie - No

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**Question 23: How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?**

Jan - I will be proud to post the endorsement on my website, social media, and printed materials!

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Brian - Stonewall is a historic and respected organization in our community, I would be deeply grateful for your support. I would feature the endorsement on my campaign website and literature, and seek to engage members in our campaign.

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Callie - I would be beyond proud to receive the endorsement of the Stonewall Democrats of Dallas. This endorsement would be prominently showcased in campaign media.

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Justin - As a candidate deeply aligned with the values and goals of the LGBTQ+ community, receiving the endorsement of the Stonewall Democrats of Dallas would be a pivotal moment for my campaign. I would proudly integrate this endorsement into every facet of my campaign communications. From featuring it prominently on my website and social media platforms to highlighting it in press releases and media interviews, this endorsement would be central to my

campaign's narrative. It would not only appear in our digital and print advertisements but also be a talking point at rallies and events, underlining my commitment to LGBTQ+ rights and inclusivity.

This endorsement would also play a key role in my community outreach, serving as a bridge to deeper discussions about the issues facing the LGBTQ+ community and the policies I advocate. For me, the Stonewall Democrats' endorsement is more than a symbol of support; it's a testament to our shared vision for a more equitable and inclusive society, and I would leverage it to reinforce my dedication to these values throughout my campaign.

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Zachariah - I would announce it to the world! Yes, I would include in my campaign media.

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Chris - Yes

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Julie - I would proudly list your endorsement on campaign materials, my website, voting guides, and press releases.

**Question 24: 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?**

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Jan - I have just joined the organization.

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Brian - I became a member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas this year.

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Callie - I have been a member for 2 years.

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Justin - Throughout my career, I have dedicated myself to frontline work, passionately advocating for civil rights and social justice. This hands-on approach has been the cornerstone of my engagement, rather than traditional political affiliations or club memberships. While I have not been a member of any Democratic club in the past, including the Stonewall Democrats of Dallas, my alignment with your values and objectives has always been clear and unwavering. As I step into the political arena, I now recognize the importance of formalizing these alignments.

Joining the Stonewall Democrats of Dallas is a step I am eager to take, not just as a formality for endorsement purposes, but as a genuine commitment to being part of a community that shares my dedication to LGBTQ+ rights and progressive causes. This membership would symbolize a deepening of my commitment to these issues, allowing me to collaborate more closely with like-minded individuals and groups. It's an opportunity to enhance my advocacy work through the support and collective strength of a community that has long been at the forefront of championing equality and justice.

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Zachariah - Yes

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Chris - I'm not a member, but sure, I will join, assuming that the cost is not prohibitive, as I am a working man funding much of my campaign out of my pocket.

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Julie - I have been a member in the past and am a current member in good standing.

**This completes the questions and answers for this race.**

# STONEWALL DEMOCRATS OF DALLAS

2024 Endorsement Screening

## HD 108 Questionnaires

Candidates:

Yasmin Simon - YS

Elizabeth Ginsberg - EG

Note: The answers provided in this document are direct copies of the answers provided by the candidates. They have not been edited or changed in any way by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas.

**Question 3: Pronouns**

YS - She/Her/Hers

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EG - She/her/hers

**Question 4: 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?**

YS - Yes, I am a Democrat, I support the Democratic Party's platform and have voted exclusively in Democratic primaries.

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EG - Yes, I so affirm. I've been a regular voter in Democratic Primaries for at least 15 years. Before Democrats contested judicial races in Dallas County, I did vote in a few Republican primaries because I am an attorney and wanted to have a voice in electing local judges.

**Question 5: Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking**

YS - 25 years' experience as a trial lawyer/Pro-bono civil rights work, including election protection, asylum cases, and expunction work/Mom of three, & two rescue dogs /First-generation American fighting to protect communities like ours

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EG - I am a mother, wife and attorney with deep roots in Texas and House District 108. I know this community, and this community knows me. I manage my own law firm that represents individuals and small businesses, many of whom live in the district. I practice in Texas state courts. I have lived in the district continuously for more than 27 years, and, with my husband, raised my two daughters here.

In 2022, I was the Democratic nominee for this seat and endorsed by Stonewall of Dallas in the Democratic Primary and appreciated their strong support in the General Election too. The experience of running a campaign and meeting the voters of the district has been invaluable in building on the momentum we started and the relationships we are building to flip HD108.

You know me. I have been participating actively in Dallas Democratic politics for seventeen years through campaigns and policy development. 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 (5 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). I have worked on Election Day as a clerk and attended county and Democratic Party training about election procedures.

As an attorney, I have volunteered with the Texas Civil Rights Project on their 2020 election protection team, and 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, and currently, I work to develop literacy skills through volunteering with Reading Partners in DISD. Through these experiences, I know the PEOPLE of HD108, I know the issues they deeply care about, and I understand the common sense Democratic changes they hope to see.

**Question 6: 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?**

YS - I became a member of Stonewall Democrats in 2023 and sponsored Stonewall Democrats at Dallas Pride 2023.

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EG - I joined as a member of Stonewall of Dallas on Labor Day, 2021.



**Question 7: Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.**

YS - House District 108 is home to a vibrant LGBTQ+ community that has become a welcoming refuge for marginalized people under attack across the country. It is a disgrace that many of our most vital LGBTQ+ spaces are represented in the legislature by a right-wing extremist. I am running because Morgan Meyer does not represent us or our values.

As a first-generation American with Muslim heritage, I know what it means to be otherized. I know what it's like to be part of a community that is under attack by the people elected to protect us. As right-wing extremists continue to villainize the LGBTQ+ community there has been a concurrent rise in acts of violence committed against LGBTQ+ people. My most important job as your representative will be to protect all of my constituents by putting an end to the vile rhetoric in the legislature which has become a device for right-wing extremists to impose devastating policies onto Texans.

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EG - As I campaigned in 2022 through today, I have had the opportunity to talk to so many members of the LGBTQ+ community and their families. I am keenly aware that the concerns of the LGBTQ+ community affect all of us. I spoke to a gay couple who shared their concerns that they wanted to start a family, but a surrogate would not be available to them because of Texas' draconian ban on abortion. I spoke with several families trying to navigate the ban on gender affirming care for their children, many of whom left the state or sent their children to college in safe states where they could receive care they and their doctors believed they could obtain the care they need. I also know members of the LGBTQ+ community, both young and old, who are making exit plans because they know their state government is hostile to them and their families.

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 any bias or discrimination. Years ago, I represented a gay man ending a long term relationship and ensuing litigation. This was before marriage equality, 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 former partner filed a complaint with the 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 Governor 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 and authoritarianism have taken root in our state, and we must all oppose this type of prejudice and discrimination.

**Question 8: Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?**

YS - Democrats in the legislature need to be a strong bulwark against the extreme policies pushed by Governor Abbott and Republican legislators. My priority in the legislature will be taking the target off the backs of vulnerable Texans, including members of our LGBTQ+ community while ensuring all Texans have access to healthcare and have legal protection from discrimination. The Republican playbook relies on fear-mongering to justify the continued marginalization of minority groups. When I am in the legislature I will use my skills as a litigator to push against the dangerous culture wars propagated by those like Morgan Meyer to hold the Republican Party accountable for ignoring Texan's basic needs.

Instead of wasting legislative time on right-wing culture wars, I will work to build coalitions of support for the myriad of common-sense policies supported by voters on both sides of the aisle. First, Texas public schools have been chronically underfunded for decades and broad majorities of Texans agree that we should increase teacher salaries and the basic

allotment for every school district in Texas without attaching private school vouchers to these increases in funding. Second, the Legislature must repeal the cruel and regressive bans on abortion that are jeopardizing the health and safety of every Texan and causing our healthcare system to decline. Third, the legislature needs to expand Medicaid to make healthcare, including gender-affirming and preventative care, more accessible and affordable in Texas. These are just a few of the policies I will push for in the Legislature, but most importantly, I am committed to partnering with our community and addressing our needs with policy solutions.

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EG - My top priority is to work to preserve our democracy by assuring that all Texans have pathways to participate in democracy and self-determination in their lives. 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 repeal the laws that place big government into our bedrooms and doctors offices, and fight to protect Texans from further incursions in their lives.

Texas has more anti-LGBTQ+ legislation than any other state. When I am elected to the Texas State House, my goal 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 discrimination has on the mental health of transgender as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual and queer youth and adults.

The reality is that when I represent House District 108 in 2025, there will still be Republican state leadership, so I have also identified some short term legislative solutions to take as many of the hard edges off extremist legislation as possible, and work to pass that legislation that is supported by the vast majority of Texans. First, we must expand Medicaid so that as many Texans as possible have coverage. There is a strong economic argument supporting expansion and there is growing support in Texas. We must also facilitate re-enrollment through re-enrollment assistance. The automatic enrollment from the pandemic ended this year, and there was an alarming number of Texans who lost coverage because they failed to re-enroll. With Representative Julie Johnson leaving the legislature, I would like to pick up where she left off and continue this work.

I believe every Texan has the right to control their reproductive health and abortion should be legal. Until that happens, we must work to create safe harbors for physicians so that they have clear guidance for when an abortion can be legally performed. We must also offer pregnant Texans who are tricked into seeking assistance from fraudulent crisis pregnancy centers confidentiality. These centers should be defunded with the funds allocated to real healthcare providers such as Planned Parenthood. As long as they are in operation, they are collecting data on pregnant Texans which is not considered protected health information. Essentially, the state is collecting identifiable data that can be used as evidence in civil suits and criminal prosecutions. This is wrong. I will sponsor legislation to protect the privacy of these records.

The next Legislature must fully fund our Constitutionally mandated public schools with funding from the current unspent surplus, and then future funding can be pegged to inflation. Tax receipts, which increase with inflation, assure that this is a viable long-term solution. Special education literacy programs must be accessible to the broadest number of qualifying children. I trust teachers, and they should be empowered to teach critical thinking by ending the micromanagement of curriculum under the guise of anti-CRT and banning books.

We also must talk about the guns in our communities, specifically the responsibilities of gun ownership and preventing gun violence. The "constitutional carry" law should be repealed, and Texans carrying guns should be required to demonstrate that they are responsible gun owners. We must reduce the destabilizing effect Texas' lax gun laws have in our communities and at our border. I support legislation that creates age limits, waiting periods, expanded background checks, and extreme risk laws permitting law enforcement or family to seek a temporary order barring gun access. We must support a mental healthcare system in our communities to make extreme risk orders effective. I am open to creative solutions related to insurance to manage risk or prohibiting financing of the most dangerous firearms to slow down impulse purchases.

The Republican incumbent in the race has been AWOL and does not listen to his constituents on these issues. I have learned from experienced state representatives that accessibility and helping constituents access their state government is one of the most important parts of the job, and I am committed to facilitating such access for all in the district -- not just special interests.

**Question 9: When elected:**

**A. how will you recruit, retain, and create a supportive environment for LGBTQ+ staff and affirming staff?**

YS - As an associate attorney, I once worked at a law firm run exclusively by men and I was routinely subjected to overt and tacit misogyny. Whether it was being given coffee orders instead of clients or unwanted advances by colleagues I know what it's like to be discriminated against in the workplace. When I became a partner at the same firm I dedicated myself to changing the workplace culture and hired a team of exclusively women including LGBTQ+ women. My team forced our colleagues to view women's roles in the workplace differently and catalyzed a cultural shift that has allowed more women to follow us and lead distinguished legal careers following our departure from the firm. More importantly, we were each other's support system and did the best work of our lives despite challenging circumstances, and many of us remain close friends today.

Being a freshman legislator will likely be similar to my time as an associate, and I will deploy the same strategy of surrounding myself with a team that represents the vast array of lived experiences in HD-108. I am committed to building a diverse team. Still, it requires valuing everyone's work and empowering candid conversation and disagreement to truly support everyone in the workplace and in HD-108.

Too often jobs in Government are only attainable to those from privileged backgrounds who can afford to take an unpaid internship or have generational connections. As a first-generation American who knows what it's like to succeed in a challenging industry, I will work to break down barriers to legislative work by committing to paying interns a living wage and recruiting staff from a variety of backgrounds outside of my network.

I am building my Campaign team the same way I will build my legislative team once elected. Having diverse lived experiences at the table is essential when developing electoral and legislative strategies, which is why I have surrounded myself with a team capable of challenging me and each other. My Campaign team is managed by a gay man and my campaign's mailers will be created and distributed by Blue Nation Strategies which has a staff entirely comprised of women and LGBTQ+ people. I don't fit the mold of what a legislator from HD-108 should look like, and I don't expect my staff to either. I am committed to finding the best people to serve HD-108.

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EG - 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. Diversity of staff is a priority for me to assure that I am receiving input from the broadest cross-section of the district.

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

YS - I am committed to appointing an LGBTQ+ community liaison once elected and would appreciate the opportunity to work with the Stonewall Democrats to identify that person. One of my priorities as a Legislator is to be as accessible to the community as possible. To achieve this I am committed to opening a fully staffed district office in HD-108 with an open-door policy. Legislators like Morgan Meyer run from their constituents to avoid accountability which is why we need a change in leadership. I will be accessible as your legislator so I can turn our conversations in HD-108 into policy action in Austin.

EG - Absolutely, building community relationships is vital for any state representative. I would be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ+ community regularly. I do have ongoing, strong relationships in the LGBTQ+ community and plan to continue those ongoing relationships.

**C. What non-discrimination policies will you support for employment and protection of LGBTQ+ constituents based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression?**

YS - I would support legislation to make sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression protected classes in Texas to give LGBTQ+ Texans the ability to seek civil penalties following instances of discrimination. I would also support legislation to narrowly define Texas' Religious Exemption Laws to prohibit discrimination against LGBTQ+ employees based on personal religious beliefs not impacting an employee's ability to perform their duties.

Further, many Texans either rely on their employer or the State for healthcare. I strongly support legislation to cover gender-affirming care for State employees and would support repealing Texas's Medicaid provision which prohibits covering gender-affirming healthcare for all ages.

I am also committed to blocking any local preemption laws that would bar municipalities like Dallas County from implementing additional protections for LGBTQ+ residents and employees.

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EG - I support codification in Texas of laws recognizing sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression as protected classes. There is no explicit recognition that discrimination is prohibited on these grounds in Texas. While the United States Supreme Court in *Bostock v. Clayton County, GA*, held that that under Title VII, employers are prohibited from terminating employees on the basis of homosexuality or transgender status, there has been resistance from federal courts in Texas to the EEOC's guidance on these policies and whether it extends to conduct. The lesson here is that the statutes must explicitly bar discrimination on these grounds for Texans to have the protections they deserve.

**Question 10: If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support legislation and/or constitutional amendments pertaining to: A. LGBTQ+ Couples adopting and providing foster care to children?**

YS - In 2022 we saw extremist Republicans like Ken Paxton's willingness to jeopardize federal funding for the State's foster care and adoption agencies so they can continue discriminating against same-sex couples.

In the legislature, I will work to undo the damage done by H.B. 3859 (passed in 2017) which allows foster care and adoption agencies that contract with the state of Texas to discriminate against LGBTQ+ parents. I would support legislation that requires Texas to comply with conditions for federal funding by banning discrimination against LGBTQ+ parents by agencies who receive State funding.

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EG - I believe LGBTQ+ couples should be permitted and encouraged to adopt and provide foster care. Every child needs a loving home. Our foster care system is in crisis, and working to expand the pool of qualified foster parents is one piece of the solution. I would sponsor legislation prohibiting discrimination in considering whether an LGBTQ+ person should be able to adopt or serve as a foster parent. I would also sponsor legislation 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?**

YS - Despite being ruled unconstitutional in 2003, Texas's ban on sodomy and "homosexual conduct" is still on the books, the law was a symbol of hate when it passed and it's still symbolic today. However, the continued failure of the Legislature to repeal this section of Texas's penal code shows how much power right-wing interest groups like Texas Values have in the legislature to impose extreme and dehumanizing policies on Texans. We need a stronger progressive

political movement, led by Democrats, to directly oppose right-wing special interest groups to successfully repeal this law and block new discriminatory legislation. Not only will I vote to repeal the sodomy law in the legislature, I will also partner with our community to amplify LGBTQ+ voices to create the political force needed to successfully repeal this law.

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EG - I support the repeal of the sodomy law. The lesson has been learned from Roe being overturned -- old "zombie laws" must be repealed. If the Supreme Court were to overturn Lawrence v. Texas, suddenly, sodomy would be illegal, and the LGBTQ+ community could be targeted for consensual sexual conduct.

### **C. Supporting the repeal of the Texas Marriage/Civil Union Amendment?**

YS - I continue to support Dallas County Lawmakers' efforts to repeal the State's definition of marriage through a constitutional amendment. The U.S. Supreme Court made clear in the Dobbs decision that precedent regarding marriage equality, access to contraception, and protections from discrimination are in jeopardy. We know we cannot rely on federal courts to protect our basic freedoms in Texas, which is why it's paramount that the Legislature prioritize repealing the marriage/ civil union amendment during the next legislative session.

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EG - I support the repeal of the Texas Marriage/Civil Union amendment. It is wrong and dangerous to have our Texas Constitution in direct conflict with the United States Constitution. If the Supreme Court changes course, Texas families will suddenly have no legal protection for their marriages and families.

### **D. Supporting safe schools for LGBTQ+ students, staff, and families?**

YS - As a legislator, I will fight against any attempt to pass discriminatory education policies. We need legislators who will do the hard work of repealing the regressive laws we already have in place like the bathroom bill and bans on Trans students participating in sports. I will always support teachers and I will fight against attempts to censor classrooms through book bans and other discriminatory policies. When teachers are allowed to show up as their full selves to school, students will do the same and we don't need the legislature to get in our teachers' way.

I will also take action to ensure school safety funds go towards making all of our students safer, rather than funding the salaries of unlicensed school chaplains. Instead, the legislature should fund licensed mental health professionals who have the necessary training to support and protect all of our students, especially vulnerable populations like LGBTQ+ students. Our legislature should be focused on giving our teachers raises and ensuring our students have the resources they need to thrive instead of imposing their ideologies onto all of our kids.

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EG - I support safe schools for LGBTQ+ students who are some of the most vulnerable and at risk students in our schools. Schools must have explicit statements of non-discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression, with supporting procedures to address discrimination in schools. These policies and procedures to enforce non-discrimination protect students, teachers and staff, freeing them to focus on the work of education. Parents are also assured that they will be treated as a partner in their child's education without discrimination, and can address discrimination they or their children experience.

I have talked to countless teachers, school staff, and local school board members who resoundingly agree that Texas students must have true guidance counselors at the appropriate staffing levels. Currently, counselors are stretched extremely thin and cannot keep up with the demands of their increasing student ratio. Clergy are not an appropriate substitute and may harm the well-being of the LGBTQ+ youth if they are non-affirming, incorporate religious training with counseling, or are simply not qualified as counselors. I would support legislation reinstating the LGBTQ+ youth resources listed on the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services website. I support additional budget dollars to the School Safety Allotment for social, emotional, mental health, and school climate strategies.

**E. If applicable to your office, how would you address recent laws enacted such as laws requiring transgender Student Athletes to participate in sports based on their gender assigned at birth?**

YS - We need legislators who will call out this legislation for what it is. Republicans are villainizing transgender students to gain traction for their culture war agenda as a device to force extreme and harmful policies onto our kids. Legislators should focus on protecting all of our kids, including Trans students, with mental health funding and anti-bullying legislation to allow all students to have an enriching academic experience regardless of their identity. We also need to show how these policies hurt all Texans by making our state a less desirable place to get an education, compete in sports, and do business.

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EG - I would advocate for and support the repeal of the law requiring student athletes to participate in sports based on their gender assigned at birth. 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. There is no evidence supporting an unfair advantage. 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.

**F. How would you address Texas Abortion bans that interfere between a private individual's right to all healthcare options as medically determined between the pregnant person and their healthcare provider?**

YS - As we watched Kate Cox's story unfold we saw first-hand how cruel the Texas abortion ban is. We know that the "exceptions" in our State's abortion ban are inaccessible even in the most extreme cases. We need to restore reproductive freedom in Texas and allow doctors to perform the healthcare their patients need.

Following the Dobbs decision Texas Republicans have cut funding from Planned Parenthood, forcing them to rely almost exclusively on donations to provide essential services. One of my top priorities in the legislature will be to stop the state's funding of "crisis pregnancy centers" and reestablish Planned Parenthood's funding so they can provide healthcare and services across Texas.

Democrats need to run on reproductive freedom in 2024 by amplifying the cruelty of the laws Republican extremists like Morgan Meyer voted for. The path to restoring reproductive freedom in Texas requires political consequences for the elected officials who voted for our draconian ban on abortion. I intend to win this campaign by holding Morgan Meyer accountable for eliminating basic freedoms in Texas to get us one seat closer to a pro-choice majority in the legislature.

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EG - I believe every Texan has the right to control their reproductive health and abortion should be legal. Until that happens, I will work to mitigate the harsh effects of the current laws, by creating safe harbors for physicians so that they have clear guidance for when an abortion can be legally performed. I would partner with physicians to determine appropriate guidelines respecting patients and need for clarity under the current law. If we do not do this, the brain drain from our medical community will only increase making health care less accessible for more Texans.

We must also work to recognize as many exceptions as possible including miscarriage treatment, non-viability of a fetus, rape, incest, and danger to the health of the mother. The Republican incumbent to this office promised to work to codify these exceptions when he met with the Dallas Morning News in 2022 endorsement interviews. However, it is clear he did nothing to create exceptions and lied to win votes in 2022. We must also offer pregnant Texans who are tricked into seeking assistance from fraudulent crisis pregnancy centers confidentiality. These centers should be defunded with the funds allocated to real healthcare providers such as Planned Parenthood. As long as they are in operation, they are collecting data on pregnant Texans which is not considered protected health information. Essentially, the state is collecting identifiable data that can be used as evidence in civil suits and criminal prosecutions. This is wrong. I will sponsor legislation to protect the privacy of these records.

**G. 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?**

YS - Republican culture war legislation is not only immoral, it's bad for business. In 2022, Texas saw a sharp decrease in the number of companies announcing headquarter relocations to the state. Sixty-two companies announced headquarters relocations to Texas in 2021. In 2022, that number was down to 16, the lowest number in the last five years. As of September 2023, only 15 new companies have relocated to Texas. Texas Republican policies discriminate against the workforces that call and want to call Texas home. To create an economy that ensures opportunities for all Texans we need to have a cultural and economic environment that encourages businesses to invest in Texas. This work starts in the Legislature by opposing the Republican culture wars and giving workers and businesses alike the support they need to grow our economy.

Unions are one of the best tools our economy has to address income inequality. It's no surprise that as unions have been undermined by the legislature in recent years, we have seen income inequality rising. In the legislature I will fight for unions' collective bargaining rights, workers' rights to form new unions, and find new pathways to ensure workers have access to living wages and affordable healthcare.

Texas also has the highest rate of child poverty in the nation. To address this crisis, I would support legislation to strengthen social services by providing more assistance to low income families. We know a quality education is the pathway to the middle class and I believe the Legislature should focus on ensuring all of our children have access to equal opportunities at school and give parents the necessary support to complete or continue their education. Finally, I would support increasing the minimum wage to ensure more families have access to a living wage.

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EG - Texas has a relatively strong economy that has been put at risk by the extremist Republican agenda; however, all Texans have not enjoyed the state's prosperity. Free enterprise works, but capitalism must have some guardrails to preserve a democracy and ensure that the benefits flow throughout our communities. The growing income inequality is inconsistent with a healthy democracy. We need to raise the minimum wage, offer child care incentives and increase access to health care so that every Texas who wants to work can do so and earn a living wage.

Long term investments are critical to improve income inequality in Texas. The most important long term investment is public education, including 1) fully funding our Constitutionally required public schools; 2) ensuring every child can read by third grade, and making remedial assistance available for every child not meeting that standard; 3) offering a rigorous curriculum requiring critical thinking; 4) offering career preparation tracks in public schools tied to job demand and job projections; 5) continuing to support a robust community college system that offers career training for in demand, high paying jobs. Education investment is good for Texans and makes Texas a more attractive place to do business.

When anti-LGBTQ+ legislation was making its way through the Texas Legislature, many business leaders formally and publicly condemned such legislation. Discriminatory legislation that seeks to reduce diversity is bad for businesses. Discriminatory policies make it difficult for companies to attract a diverse workforce. 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.

**Question 11: 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?**

YS - Texas has 4.9 million uninsured residents, 16.6% of our population, more than twice the national rate. The most straightforward way to close this coverage gap is by expanding Medicaid which would be federally funded through the

Affordable Care Act and provide free insurance to nearly one million Texans while simultaneously strengthening our healthcare infrastructure with new federal dollars.

The quality of insurance coverage is as important as access. Since a vast majority of Texans rely on employer-provided healthcare I am a strong advocate for expanding collective bargaining rights to give unions and their members more leverage to mandate high-quality employer-provided healthcare coverage.

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EG - Texas must expand Medicaid so that as many Texans as possible have coverage. The economic argument for expansion is convincing and supports struggling rural hospitals. Additionally, our state must facilitate re-enrollment through re-enrollment assistance. The automatic enrollment from the pandemic ended this year, and there was an alarming number of Texans who lost coverage because they failed to re-enroll. The insurance exchange under the ACA could also be enhanced through better insurance choices.

We must also repeal legislation that interferes with the doctor-patient relationship, including the abortion ban and prohibiting gender affirming care in minors. Texas is quickly becoming known in the medical community as a place where you cannot practice medicine without state interference. This will lead to a loss of medical providers in our state.

I also support additional 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.

**Question 12: What are your ideas to respond to evidence of climate change?**

YS - Elected Republicans and the fossil fuel industry know oil and gas aren't going to be the drivers of economic growth they have historically been which is why Texas is already the nation's leading producer of renewable energy. With the legislature as a partner, not an impediment, I know Texas can lead the green economy while addressing the reality of climate change we cannot afford to ignore.

I would also support legislation to subsidize efficiency upgrades to homes such as solar panels, heat pumps, and insulation.

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EG - 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. Today, our legislature penalizes innovation in a misguided attempt to protect the fossil fuel industry. Industry is more proactive on climate change than our state.

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 creates and utilizes 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 harm caused by increased claims to the insurance industry and increasing insurance premiums.

**Question 13: If applicable to your office, what specific ideas do you have to strengthen the reliability of electric power supply to all Texans?**

YS - Because of carbon pollution from burning fossil fuels, we will see increases in the frequency & intensity of extreme weather events which will further stress the grid and make it increasingly insecure without regular upgrades. Following the 2021 blackout the legislature passed band-aid solutions that may help avoid catastrophe in the short term, but are far from ensuring the long-term reliability of our grid. I would support legislation that increases funding for inspections



and requires natural gas producers and pipelines to weatherize their equipment, just as electric generation facilities are required to do. The state must also develop a real demand response program for residents to incentivize energy conservation. These incentives exist for major industrial users like bitcoin miners; they should also be available for Texas residents. Additionally, I support investing in renewable energy generation and storage (built with union labor) to create a more sustainable and reliable grid.

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EG - While the Texas Republicans want to convince us they fixed the grid, the Texas summer heat warned us multiple times this year how fragile the grid still is and we are still one major Texas weather moment away from a massive failure. 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. Recently, there has been success with battery storage despite legislative attempts to penalize batteries as a tool to stabilize supply. Long term, alternate energy supplies made possible by new technologies such as wind power with improved battery potential, must be part of the solution.

Consumers must be considered as policies are developed. Under the current system, the cost of failure is borne by consumers. Natural gas producers engaged in price gouging that would be illegal if charges were made directly to the consumer. 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.

**Question 14: If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support legislation restoring previous funding for HIV prevention in Texas including access to PrEP?**

YS - Texas has the second highest rate of new HIV infections in the country, and access to preventative care like PrEP is essential as we work to eradicate HIV. In the legislature, it will be my goal to ensure that stigma, insurance status, and income do not dictate a person's access to PrEP.

The Department of Health HIV Division's request for funding needs to be addressed by the Legislature and Legislators need to have conversations with local care providers about the impacts of the requested allocations. In addition to subsidizing PrEP, we need to restore funding for core prevention activities such as testing and outreach. We must also increase the maximum number of organizations that can be funded for HIV prevention and treatment so more providers have the resources to provide PrEP.

Expanding Medicaid in Texas would have the most immediate and widespread impact on the accessibility of PrEP as federal regulations under the ACA mandate coverage for PrEP. Expanding Medicaid would also allow clinics serving low-income and uninsured Texans to draw down millions in additional federal funding to increase the availability of their services. Further, I support raising the State's Medicaid income threshold to allow more uninsured Texans to qualify for coverage.

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EG - I 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 widely 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.

**Question 15: In light of the Supreme Court decision in December 2023 against reparative/conversion therapy, how would you lead the fight against reparative/conversion therapy in Texas?**

YS - LGBTQ+ kids need support, not shaming. We know conversion therapy is pseudo-science which often leads to negative outcomes for children and their families. It is my view that a licensed counselor's right to free speech ends where a child's right to free expression and self-realization begins. As such, the State has the authority to regulate best

practices for counselors which includes banning the practice of conversion therapy. I would support legislation previously proposed by Rep. Celia Israel which would penalize licensed counselors who try to change a minor's sexual orientation or gender identity.

Texas also needs to make licensed counseling more accessible. Too often families are forced to seek mental healthcare from unregulated religious institutions that routinely undermine science and spread misinformation. Expanding access to affordable insurance by expanding Medicaid will allow more families to seek professional care from licensed practitioners and allow the State to regulate standards of care and eliminate the practice of conversion therapy.

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EG - I support legislation banning reparative/conversion therapy in Texas. There is no objective science supporting such therapy. It does long term psychological damage to patients. The therapy appears to be religion disguised as healthcare.

In December 2023, a split Supreme Court decided not to consider an appeal of a case that affirmed bans to reparative/conversion therapy in Washington State. This ruling suggests, without deciding, that the Supreme Court considers such laws to be an appropriate use of legislative action. The circuit court opinion was based on the idea that states are free to regulate the conduct of medical professionals. Other circuit courts have decided differently. I am concerned that the analysis from this case could be used to limit review of Texas state law prohibiting gender affirming care to minors. While I believe the Washington regulation under review is good policy, the same analysis could be used to affirm an appeal from Texas' ban on gender affirming care for minors as being a regulation of the conduct of medical pros.

What we can take from this recent Supreme Court case is that the legislature must act to limit reparative/conversion therapy on grounds that can be distinguished from the law prohibiting gender affirming care. Reparative/conversion therapy should be banned because the underlying justification is not in mental healthcare but in religious doctrine, and religion is not medical justification. Texas legislators must be guided by medical professionals, not right wing religious leaders, in enacting laws governing the practice of medicine.

**Question 16: What are your ideas for immigration reform at the state level? How would you support the right of immigrants to seek asylum, hold employment, and have a clear path to citizenship?**

YS - I support the lawsuit brought by El Paso County against the State of Texas which challenges the State of Texas' authority to enforce immigration policy instead of the federal government. I do not support legislation to make illegal border crossings a state crime as such a law, apart from questions of its morality, would clearly be federally preempted, and therefore unenforceable. It is the federal government's responsibility to ensure and enforce border security and regulate immigration.

I recently met with El Paso Rep. Veronica Escobar and learned more about her bipartisan immigration bill in Congress. I support Rep. Escobar's efforts to pass comprehensive immigration reform to guarantee a pathway to citizenship, streamline the asylum process, and guarantee economic opportunities for immigrants. In the legislature, I would work to build a bipartisan group of legislators to demand Congress pass this comprehensive immigration bill to restore the Federal government's role in protecting migrants.

I would also join the bipartisan caucus of local officials in their efforts to repeal the law requiring them to use their already thin resources to enforce federal and state immigration policies.

Access to a clear path to citizenship and asylum is vitally important. As a first-generation American, I want my kids to grow up in a country where the American Dream is attainable to anyone. In my pro-bono work helping migrants become legal residents, I help families like mine build lives in America, but I know we need structural change to restore humanity in our immigration system which starts with Congress doing its job and restricting Governor Abbott's power to override federal policies.

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EG - My college major was International Business which gives me a perspective of opportunity and growth at our border. As a Texan, I know that immigrants are key contributors to our state's history of opportunity, innovation and success. I defer to the federal government on immigration matters, and urge our national leaders to do the hard work reform our immigration laws in smart and compassionate ways. 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 recent state legislation creating new categories of crimes for migrants. I believe this legislation is likely unconstitutional and will create a host of authoritarian crackdowns in immigrant communities. I anticipate racial profiling by law enforcement in determining who is an undocumented migrant. Our communities will be less safe because minority communities will not cooperate with law enforcement, which will make law enforcement and prosecution more difficult. Additionally, the laws are unfunded mandates that place undue burden on local police and prosecutors. Our Dallas County jails are simply not able to handle to anticipated increase in incarcerated people due to these new laws. Rural communities will also be overwhelmed with more and more arrests and deportations without due process.

I believe state funding for the border wall and other barriers should be ended. There is no accountability for the huge sums being spent at our border. There is no evidence of the effectiveness of the wall, the increased law enforcement presence at the border, or the transportation of migrants without a plan or coordination with other jurisdictions. Governor Abbott's actions are nothing more than cruel political theater for the right-wing base. The dehumanization of those persons who are most vulnerable will take its toll on us as a society. I believe we can lead in a smart way, working with the federal government, preserving the integrity of our border, and growing our economy all while maintaining our compassion.

I do believe that there are communities in our country that would welcome immigrant labor and believe facilitating transportation to areas that seek immigrant labor may be an appropriate action if it is voluntary and done in cooperation with the federal government.

**Question 17: 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 training each session and submit certification to be published online that their office staff fulfilled the requirements?**

YS - Yes

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EG - It is apparent from the last legislature session that mandatory training is necessary in the Texas legislature. While the legislature did hold one of its representatives accountable for harassment and rape through impeachment, the "frat house" mentality of our legislature must change. I do believe in training to change behavior, and believe that training and accountability is a minimal standard to reduce discriminatory and harassing conduct.

**Question 18: If applicable to your office, how would you address voter suppression in Texas and work to expand access to voting by all eligible voters?**

YS - I have spent years working in election protection and have seen firsthand how often eligible voters are turned away from their polling place due to Texas's archaic voting laws.

In the legislature, I would focus on making it easier to register to vote. To start, Texas should join the vast majority of other states in implementing online voter registration rather than requiring eligible voters to register with paper forms which have been withheld and used as a tool of voter suppression. Texas should allow same-day voter registration to make it easier for first-time voters to participate in the electoral process without jumping the hurdles of bureaucratic red tape.

I also support repealing the majority of the voting restrictions passed by the legislature in 2021 through SB 1. We should make the vote-by-mail application process simple, we should allow 24-hour drive-through voting, we should allow friends and neighbors to carpool to the polls, and we should require employers to compensate workers for the time it takes to cast a ballot.

Our Democracy works when everyone participates which is why the GOP attempted to undermine our voting rights following the 2020 election. We need pro-democracy legislators, regardless of political party, to implement common-sense reforms to modernize our election systems to enfranchise as many people as possible in our democracy.

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EG - I support efforts to make voting easier and transparent 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.

I am concerned that the far right-wing of the Republican party is working to take us back to the stone age with paper ballots and hand counting. I oppose such legislation and would support transparency measures to assure Texas can document the security of its election procedures.

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.

**Question 19: How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?**

YS - The Stonewall Democrats' endorsement would be front-page news for my Campaign! We would include Stonewalls logo and endorsement on our website, social media, and other campaign materials. Our campaign has also set a goal of knocking on 20,000 doors to talk to every potential Democratic Primary voter. We would love to collaborate with the Stonewall Democrats to facilitate voter engagement events through meet and greets, block walks, phone banks, and postcard writing to increase voter participation and enthusiasm in 2024.

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EG - I earned the Stonewall endorsement in the 2022 primary and it was an endorsement that made a difference. Voters in House District 108 respect the thoroughness of the Stonewall endorsement process and understand that it is an organization that represents the LGBTQ+ community and stands as a strong ally to so many others in the Democratic party. A Stonewall endorsement is one I would be proud to receive again. 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.

**Question 20: 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?**

YS - In 2021 I contributed to the campaign of Republican Nathaniel Moran. Nathaniel is a family friend and worked closely with my husband as the Smith County Attorney in their opioid litigation. Nathaniel was instrumental in securing opioid harm reduction money in Smith and Dallas County and when he asked me to support his run for Congress, we believed he would be a reasonable Republican in a ruby-red district who would do good work on behalf of Texans. However, in Congress Rep. Moran has fallen in line with the extremists in the Republican party which is beyond disappointing to me as a friend, and enraging to me as a Texan who cares about our State's future. Nathaniel is the only Republican I have contributed to and I can assure you he will not have my financial or political support in the future.

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EG - No.

**This completes the questions and answers for this race.**

# STONEWALL DEMOCRATS OF DALLAS

2024 Endorsement Screening

## HD 112 Questionnaires

Candidates:

Averie Bishop - AB

Note: The answers provided in this document are direct copies of the answers provided by the candidates. They have not been edited or changed in any way by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas.

**Question 3: Pronouns**

AB - She/her

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**Question 4: 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?**

AB - Yes, voting history only for Democrats

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**Question 5: Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking**

AB - I'm a recent law school graduate, advocate for reproductive healthcare in partnership with planned parenthood, small business owner, worked on the hill, and I'm a kind and honest human being!

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**Question 6: 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?**

AB - Yes, I pledge to be a member before endorsement screenings!

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**Question 7: Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.**

AB - During my undergraduate studies at SMU, I majored in Human Rights. My degree included courses on gender equality, LGBTQ+ history, and beyond. Additionally, I have been a strong advocate for the community while in high school. My state championship piece in poetry was about the right to love anyone and everyone.

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**Question 8: Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?**

AB - I plan to write and pass legislation that supports and includes all Texans, not just a select few. I will do this through socioeconomic bills like ensuring medical healthcare for the LGBTQ+ community and mental health resources for the youth.

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**Question 9: When elected:**

**A. how will you recruit, retain, and create a supportive environment for LGBTQ+ staff and affirming staff?**

AB - When elected, I will leverage my large social media following and create content that teaches the importance of treating others kindly, no matter their identity or background. I have also actively sought to include the LGBTQ+ community in my campaign staff currently.

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

AB - Yes!

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**C. What non-discrimination policies will you support for employment and protection of LGBTQ+ constituents based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression?**

AB - If I had to pick just one, currently there is no law in Texas prohibiting discrimination in public schools based on sexual orientation or gender identity and expression. I will work to ensure the safety and protection of our LGBTQ+ youth and staff through legislation that inhibits discrimination in our schools.

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**Question 10: If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support legislation and/or constitutional amendments pertaining to: A. LGBTQ+ Couples adopting and providing foster care to children?**

AB - I would help to draft, write, and pass legislation that would prohibit discrimination of adoptive parents based on sexual orientation. One of the greatest strategies I can leverage to convince the "other side" is bringing the issue back to its core purpose, which is to ensure that every child has loving parents. And loving a child isn't only specific to heteronormative couples.

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

AB - Support

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

AB - Support

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**D. Supporting safe schools for LGBTQ+ students, staff, and families?**

AB - Support

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**E. If applicable to your office, how would you address recent laws enacted such as laws requiring transgender Student Athletes to participate in sports based on their gender assigned at birth?**

AB - I would actively work against such legislation and do my best to protect the decisions of our LGBTQ+ youth.

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**F. How would you address Texas Abortion bans that interfere between a private individual's right to all healthcare options as medically determined between the pregnant person and their healthcare provider?**

AB - I will actively work against such legislation and fight to make abortions more accessible in Texas.

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**G. 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?**

AB - I believe everyone has the right to affordable housing and even more important, the right to mobility. One way to address poverty and income quality is by ensuring that our state government invests funds into public transportation and infrastructure, such as more buses, dart trains, and bike lanes.

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**Question 11: 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?**

AB - I will advocate for Medicaid expansion, access to and coverage for abortion, funding for mental health programs, healthcare benefits for retirees, and child care.

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**Question 12: What are your ideas to respond to evidence of climate change?**

AB - Focusing on public transportation and walking communities will help to eliminate the need for vehicles. Vehicles are one of the top perpetrators of causing climate change. Investing in mobility and buses and trains will, hopefully, incentivize people to use their car less.

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**Question 13: If applicable to your office, what specific ideas do you have to strengthen the reliability of electric power supply to all Texans?**

AB - \*\*no answer provided\*\*

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**Question 14: If applicable to your office, how would you lead or support legislation restoring previous funding for HIV prevention in Texas including access to PrEP?**

AB - \*\*no answer provided\*\*

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**Question 15: In light of the Supreme Court decision in December 2023 against reparative/conversion therapy, how would you lead the fight against reparative/conversion therapy in Texas?**

AB - I will work to prohibit it here in Texas and actively work against any legislation that promotes the conversion therapies.

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**Question 16: What are your ideas for immigration reform at the state level? How would you support the right of immigrants to seek asylum, hold employment, and have a clear path to citizenship?**

AB - I am a strong advocate for immigration reform, especially because of my Filipino immigrant mother. One specific piece of legislation I will advocate for is allocating funding to hiring additional lawyers and judges down at the border. Hiring more staff will allow those seeking asylum or citizenship a more efficient, accessible process and decongest the demand for representation.

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**Question 17: 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 training each session and submit certification to be published online that their office staff fulfilled the requirements?**

AB - Yes

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**Question 18: If applicable to your office, how would you address voter suppression in Texas and work to expand access to voting by all eligible voters?**

AB - One specific policy I would advocate for is to make voting a federal holiday to ensure that people who have to work can make it out to the polls.

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**Question 19: How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?**

AB - Yes! It will be included on my social media accounts and newsletter.

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**Question 20: 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?**

AB - No.

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**This completes the questions and answers for this race.**

# STONEWALL DEMOCRATS OF DALLAS

2024 Endorsement Screening

## CD 24 Questionnaires

Candidates:

Jrmar Jefferson

Jarred Davis

Congresswoman Jasmine Crockett

Note: The answers provided in this document are direct copies of the answers provided by the candidates. They have not been edited or changed in any way by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas.

### Question 3: Pronouns

JRMAR - None of the above

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JARRED - No answer provided

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JASMINE - She/Her/Hers

### Question 4: 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?

JRMAR - For a decade, I've ardently advocated for the equality of African American men and boys, staunchly discontent with the injustices they face. Despite accruing significant debt, my steadfast support for the Democratic Party propels me into the political arena for the fifteenth time, aiming to represent the party.

Confronting systemic injustices, my commitment stands unwavering. I emerge as a resolute voice challenging the prevailing norms, driven by a dedication to the rights and dignity of every individual, especially those historically marginalized.

In this 15th campaign under the Democratic Banner, I reflect on the words of a great Democratic president who proclaimed, "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little." These words deeply resonate, encapsulating the essence of my mission and the enduring spirit of the Democratic Party. Together, let us advance, steadfast in our pursuit of justice and equality for all. - Quote by Franklin D. Roosevelt, the 32nd President of the United States.

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JARRED - Yes, I affirm to support the platform and policies of the Texas Democratic Party. I vote in nearly every election. Voting is the single most expression of freedom in our democracy.

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JASMINE - I do! I am a proud lifelong Democrat and have only voted in Democratic primaries. I also served as the chair of the Democratic Party in Bowie County Texas from 2012-2016.

### Question 5: Please share any experience that illustrates your understanding of and interest in the needs of the LGBTQ+ community in your District/Role sought.

JRMAR - "In my pursuit of public service, I have faced challenges that tested my dedication to inclusivity and unity. When I ran for Dallas County Democratic Chair, my campaign encountered adversity when someone hacked my site and posted offensive content without my knowledge. Despite this attack, I stood firm, addressing the issue openly and reinforcing my unwavering belief in the collective strength of all Americans.

I firmly reject the notion of viewing ourselves as separate communities. Our shared identity as Americans transcends personal choices and differences. In times of adversity, whether facing a common foe or working towards prosperity, our duty to defend and support one another takes precedence.

During my candidacy for Congress in 2022, I exemplified this commitment by sharing the stage with fellow nominees, including a transman. I embraced every American on that stage, emphasizing the values of respect and honor. As a heterosexual man with a firm belief in the Creator Yah, I don't seek to impose personal beliefs but to build bridges of prosperity and understanding.

It is disheartening to note that my opponent, Jazzman Crockett, took a different approach. She did not share the stage

with anyone and failed to support other Democratic nominees, even when in a critical position to do so. This refusal extended beyond party lines and encompassed the support of all Americans, regardless of their background or beliefs.

My mission is rooted in advocating for all Americans, rejecting division and discrimination in any form. I firmly believe in the dream where individuals are not judged by superficial attributes but by the content of their character. I invite every American, including those reading this, to judge me based on my dream and the evidence of how I live my commitment to a united and inclusive nation."

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JARRED – Whether in my community advocacy roles throughout Dallas or in my 15 plus year career as an equal opportunity and diversity professional, I fight and have fought to ensure equity and equal treatment under organizational policies and the law.

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JASMINE - My support for and commitment to ensuring that the LGBTQ+ community is valued and as a true champion in the halls of Congress is unwavering. Upon swearing into the US House, I joined the Equality Caucus where I've remained committed to promoting equality for all people regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex characteristics, including intersex traits. During the first session of the 118th Congress, we've seen several attacks on our LGBTQ+ neighbors including trans youth. I'm proud to have stood up and fought against every single attack whether it was on the House floor or in Committee. Recently in the House Oversight committee, an attack on our trans youth surfaced as we discussed participation in "female athletics". I was proud to have uplifted the story of Texas' very own, Libby Gonzales, who was also my constituent when I served as a State Representative and a prominent voice and the face of the opposition against the trans youth sports ban in Texas. I'll never forget her mother, Rachel, bringing me to tears at our campaign launch in 2021 as she described the experience of having a safe space at the State Capitol for the first time, and that safe space was our office.

**Question 6: Please list some of your qualifications and experiences pertinent to the office you are seeking:**

JRMAR - Proven Leadership: As the Field Operations Leader in Sacramento, I successfully led the campaign against the strong mayor initiative. My experience as the 2018 Democratic Nominee for U.S. Congress provided valuable insights into the legislative process and community representation.

Diverse Political Candidacies: Having run for various offices, including County Board of Supervisors, City Council, Mayor, and U.S. Congress, I bring adaptability and an understanding of different levels of government. Community Engagement: Serving as a Dallas County Democratic Precinct Chair and a former board member of Eye of Sacramento, I actively engaged in community initiatives, demonstrating a commitment to grassroots efforts and positive change.

Philanthropy Leadership: In my role as Director of Philanthropy in the nonprofit sector, I united people around common causes and fostered community empowerment, highlighting my dedication to addressing social issues. Insights into National Politics: As a Bernie Sanders Delegate in 2016, I gained valuable insights into national politics and grassroots movements, contributing to my understanding of broader political dynamics.

Resilience and Dedication: Marked by personal challenges, including surviving a hit-and-run incident and a life-threatening car crash, my journey underscores resilience and unwavering dedication to public service. Vision for District 30: I bring a clear vision for transforming District 30 into a thriving community, prioritizing safety, education, and infrastructure to uplift the district from poverty to prosperity.

Commitment to Inclusivity: Beyond political endeavors, I address issues within the Democratic Party and advocate for the rights of marginalized communities, including Black, African American, and Negro men and boys. Transparent Governance: In governance, I prioritize transparency, accountability, and dismantling barriers to prosperity, fostering clear, honest, and open communication with the public.

Faith-Guided Leadership: Guided by my faith in Yah (יה), I lead with integrity, compassion, and righteousness, a fundamental aspect of my approach to public service.

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JARRED – I have 15+ years of equal opportunity and human resources experience in various public-sector organizations. Additionally, I have over 10 years of appointed public service experience. I have served the City of Dallas as Vice Chair of Dallas Plan Commission, Economic Development Commissioner for the City of Duncanville, Chair of the Duncanville Planning and Zoning Commission, Board President of CityLab Highschool, and Board Director for Texas A&M University-Commerce Alumni Association. These experiences and others, have prepared me for the office I am currently seeking.

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JASMINE - Sworn in almost a year ago, I've had the distinct pleasure of serving this District in the halls of the United States Congress. Serving not only as a Freshman member, but as a member of House Democratic Leadership, I've hit the ground running in an effort to ensure that the needs of my District remain at the forefront while strategically working to help regain a Democratic majority in 2024. As a member, I've personally sponsored 12 bills, have cosponsored over 485 different bills, and have read many letters all rooted in the issues pressing our communities. Whether it's affordable housing, increasing access to the ballot box, seeking solutions to the growing Fentanyl crisis, addressing the disparities that exist among vital SNAP benefits, and much more, I've sought out to address these issues with real legislative action.

**Question 7: Once you are elected, what are some of your plans specific to your office's responsibilities?**

JRMAR - Legislative Initiatives: Actively propose, advocate for, and support bills addressing healthcare, education, infrastructure, and economic development in Texas's 30th Congressional District. Constituent Outreach: Establish open communication through regular town halls, community forums, and virtual sessions to directly understand constituents' concerns. Economic Development: Collaborate with local businesses and economic development agencies to attract investments, create jobs, and stimulate economic growth.

Infrastructure Improvement: Advocate for federal funding to support projects enhancing transportation, broadband access, and critical infrastructure components. Education Enhancement: Support legislation increasing school funding, promoting teacher training, and enhancing access to quality education. Healthcare Accessibility: Work towards healthcare reform to improve access, reduce costs, and address health disparities within communities.

Environmental Stewardship: Champion initiatives addressing climate change, promoting clean energy alternatives, and ensuring responsible use of natural resources. Veterans Support: Secure funding for veterans' programs, healthcare services, and employment opportunities. Criminal Justice Reform: Support legislation focused on reform, reducing recidivism, and promoting equitable treatment within the system.

Diversity and Inclusion: Foster an inclusive and diverse community through engagement with leaders from different backgrounds and advocacy for policies promoting diversity.

My hiring philosophy revolves around merit, competency, and a sincere dedication to advancing the district. Candidates driven by a genuine desire to effect positive change, understand LGBTQ+ challenges, and address issues related to poverty and economic disparities align with my vision. The nucleus of my team will comprise individuals devoted to the well-being of every person in our district, substantiating this commitment through tangible actions. Fundamentally, my approach to hiring is anchored in the principles of empathy, inclusivity, and an unwavering dedication to the advancement of our community. It transcends personal lifestyle choices, focusing instead on a collective commitment to the welfare of all, regardless of background or identity.

JARRED – I immediately plan to formulate my legislative plan and congressional priorities to fully understand and meet constituent needs. This office is unique and leaves little to no room for celebrity. It represents 1 of 435 unique districts. To me that means, I need to fully understand all the needs of the district set a plan to get after finding federal solutions our local problems.

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JASMINE - I've had a productive first year as the Congresswoman for TX-30. As I look ahead at another term and the 119th Congress, I'm committed to continuing the fight on issues including expanding access to affordable housing, never losing sight of our fight for voting rights, working to close the healthcare gap that exist within our communities, and much more.

While I was able accomplish a lot in my first year, the thing that I'm most proud of is the constituent services that my office was able to offer to our constituents. We opened over 1500 cases and closed nearly 950 cases for our constituents dealing with federal issues including immigration, accessing social security benefits, receiving past due tax returns, and much more. As a result of this work, we returned over \$977,000 to our constituents across the District.

One of my priorities has also been to ensure that federal investment is brought down to the District and disbursed equitably across the 12 cities that make up TX-30. I'm proud to say that in my first year as a member of Congress, I've brought home approximately \$176,671,284 in federal grants for infrastructure projects, expanded healthcare services such as HIV testing and treatment, environmental cleaning funds, and much more.

Regardless of the issue, legislation, event, etc. I'll continue leveraging my office to ensure that my constituents get the best.

**Question 8: If elected how will you recruit, retain, and create a supportive environment for LGBTQ+ staff and affirming staff?**

JRMAR - Inclusive Policies and Practices: Equal Opportunities: I will prioritize implementing non-discriminatory policies supporting LGBTQ+ individuals, ensuring equal opportunities in hiring, promotion, and benefits. Eliminating Biases: I am committed to actively working on the elimination of biases in recruitment, fostering a fair and inclusive workplace.

Diversity and Sensitivity Training: Biblical Insight: Mandatory diversity and sensitivity training will include biblical insight, guided by the scripture "A house divided against itself cannot stand" (Mark 3:25). LGBTQ+ Focus: This training will focus on LGBTQ+ issues, fostering understanding, and promoting a culture of respect to create a valued and respected work environment.

Affirmative Hiring and District Demographics: Diverse Talent: Actively seeking diverse talent and ensuring a fair recruitment process will be fundamental to building a staff that mirrors the rich diversity of our community. District Demographics: Recognizing the district's demographics, especially the significant representation of Negro, African American, or Black individuals, underscores the importance of a dedicated staff for achieving results.

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs): Open Dialogue: Establishing LGBTQ+ and affirming employee resource groups will provide a platform for open dialogue, support, and networking. Community Involvement: These groups will contribute to a sense of community within the workplace, ensuring diverse voices are heard and acknowledged.

Mental Health Support and Equal Benefits: Tailored Support: Advocating for mental health support services tailored to the unique challenges faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, including counseling, support groups, and awareness programs. Equality in Benefits: Ensuring LGBTQ+ employees receive equal benefits, including health care, family leave, and workplace perks, is crucial for upholding fairness.

Transparent Anti-Discrimination Policies and Leadership Representation: Strict Enforcement: Paramount importance will be given to implementing and strictly enforcing anti-discrimination policies explicitly addressing LGBTQ+ issues for a workplace where all employees feel safe and respected.

Diverse Leadership: Actively working to ensure LGBTQ+ individuals are represented at all levels, including leadership positions, promoting diverse role models and signaling commitment to equality. Regular Check-Ins and Overall Non-Discrimination Commitment: Continuous Improvement: Establishing regular check-ins with LGBTQ+ staff for feedback ensures continuous improvement and a responsive approach to evolving workforce needs.

Universal Commitment: As a man of the law, my commitment is universal, ensuring that no one, regardless of background or identity, will face discrimination. Rights are subject only to cause and effect, guided by legal principles.

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JARRED – As a matter of principle, I believe in ensuring equal opportunity and creating a work environment that is supportive of all employees, including LGBTQ+ staff. I believe my staff should reflect the people of the District. Not just in word, but in staffing and true and effective outreach. This means I intended to recruit and talented team members that reflect various communities, but also ensuring they have an environment that support and protect those differences, while serving the people of District 30 well.

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JASMINE - I will continue the culture we have established in our office to be inclusive, respectful, intersectional, and dedicated to service. I am proud of the team I currently have, made up of several members of the LGBTQ+ community. Our office does not believe in discrimination nor tokenism. We seek out the best talent and those who are committed to the cause and it so happens that some of the best applicants we selected are from the LGBTQ+ community. We have a zero tolerance policy for bigotry and harassment of any kind and our doors are always open to staff to ensure everyone feels safe, valued, and their best selves while serving the people.

**Question 9: Would you be willing to appoint a liaison to meet with the LGBTQ community on an ongoing basis? If not, why?**

JRMAR - Certainly, I am wholeheartedly committed to fostering open and continuous communication with LGBTQ Americans. Recognizing the importance of maintaining a direct and meaningful dialogue, I am more than willing to appoint a dedicated liaison to engage with LGBTQ Americans on an ongoing basis. This ensures that their voices, concerns, and perspectives are heard and considered in the decision-making processes. Open communication is key to understanding and addressing the unique needs of LGBTQ Americans, and I am dedicated to facilitating this collaborative and inclusive approach throughout my term in office.

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JARRED – Yes. I believe this important to understanding issues and establishing effecting lines of communication to ensure the LGBTQ+ community needs are understood and are met at the congressional level.

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JASMINE - Absolutely! Whether it was during my time in the State House or currently as a member of Congress, my staff and I have remained committed to having an accessible office where all constituency groups are engaged. Even as it relates to certain legislation coming through the House, I pride myself on making sure we fully understand perspectives of those that will be potentially affected across my District. While I may not have an official liaison at this point, I've always kept the direct lines of communication open. My friends within the community communicate with me directly about any pressing issues that I need to be made aware of.

**Question 10: What non-discrimination policies will you support for employment and protection of LGBTQ+ constituents based on sexual orientation, gender identity and expression?**

JRMAR - If elected, my commitment to non-discrimination policies for employment and the protection of LGBTQ+ constituents is unequivocal. I will advocate for and support comprehensive policies that prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and expression. These policies will extend across all aspects of employment, ensuring equal opportunities for hiring, promotion, and benefits.

I carry a profound understanding of discrimination, having personally experienced being denied opportunities due to

being heterosexual, Negro, and adherent to a faith that guides specific behaviors and dietary choices. My commitment to non-discrimination is rooted in this firsthand awareness of the impact such bias can have on individuals. I believe in fostering an environment where everyone, regardless of their background, can thrive without fear of prejudice or denial.

My moral code emphasizes honor, respect, and disciplined living, guided by a faith committed to serving others. I bring this ethos to my advocacy for non-discrimination policies, recognizing that true service means creating a workplace and community where diversity is celebrated and every individual is afforded equal opportunities.

In my leadership, I prioritize results and a serious work ethic, understanding the gravity of the challenges faced by people in our community. This is not a game; it's a responsibility to address the real issues affecting the lives of individuals. As a public servant, I am here to show up to work, not to play, especially when people are suffering and struggling to make ends meet. In the words of my guiding principle: "Show up to work, not to play, because I don't play no damn games while people are suffering and struggling to make it." This quote encapsulates the seriousness and dedication with which I approach public service and the responsibility I feel to deliver tangible results for those I serve.

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JARRED – I fully support equal opportunity laws and policies that protect LGBTQ+ constituents. Many policies have worked to expand protections in the area; however, we must continue to expand protections and most critical provide oversight into the existing policies to ensure they are protecting and responding to the needs the policies was crafted to address. Without question, my personal principles and professional experience wires to make sure equity is applied to all people. This is how we build high performing teams and welcoming communities.

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JASMINE - I believe that everyone should have equal access to employment and shouldn't be discriminated because of who they love or their sexual orientation. In my office, we have a zero-tolerance policy for bigotry and harassment of any kind. Additionally, we embrace those members of our team who associate themselves with the LGBTQ+ community. I would support any legislation that comes up that works to condemn discrimination in the workplace for our LGBTQ+ neighbors. I've always approached these matters as civil rights violations & due to my background, I do believe that I enter the conversation with a level of credibility.

#### **Question 11: How can congress play a role to get Roe v. Wade codified into law?**

JRMAR - "As a Congressman, I value the principles established in Roe v. Wade but also respect the autonomy of states to decide based on their residents' values. I won't push for codifying Roe v. Wade federally, acknowledging the diversity of opinions across states. States should decide on abortion, reflecting their unique perspectives. Just as opinions on war differ, abortion is nuanced, requiring a society of free thinkers. Allowing individuals to decide for themselves upholds individual liberties and universal laws.

Overstepping liberty risks destabilization, so I advocate empowering states to decide based on their citizens' values. If a state chooses to allow or restrict abortion, it should be a decision made locally. To address root causes, I support laws promoting family stability and comprehensive education, including reintroducing Home Economics, life training classes, ROTC, and enhanced physical education. These initiatives prepare young minds for adulthood and parenthood, addressing family planning and responsible decision-making.

The focus should be on fostering a society that encourages responsible choices through education and support. Addressing the lack of planned parenthood and enhancing education equips individuals to make informed decisions for themselves and their families." "As a Congressman, I'm neither strictly pro-choice nor pro-life; my stance is pro-liberty and pro-responsibility. I believe in preserving individual liberties while recognizing the responsibility that comes with impactful decisions.

The complexities of abortion require a nuanced approach respecting diverse perspectives. I'm committed to upholding



liberty, allowing people the freedom to decide based on their beliefs. Simultaneously, I emphasize responsibility, recognizing the need for thoughtful consideration and accountability in our choices. Championing a pro-liberty and pro-responsibility stance aims to foster a society valuing individual freedoms while encouraging a sense of duty. This reflects my dedication to finding common ground and promoting thoughtful dialogue on issues affecting Americans' lives."

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JARRED – This law has become a superficial wedge issue between Republicans and Democrats, which prevents it from being codified into law. I believe Congress can continue its efforts to seek bipartisan support to have this law codified. I personally believe we must work to make sure the majority has a clear picture of how the American people really feel about reproductive health and allow that guide law and policy.

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JASMINE - Congress must, at a minimum, codify Roe v. Wade to protect the right to abortion and enshrine it into law and end the Hyde Amendment as well. These actions are the floor for what we can achieve to expand reproductive justice. I would support eliminating and prohibiting frivolous and mundane requirements placed upon abortion providers and facilities that cause less doctors to be able to provide abortion care. I was proud to fight against each abortion restriction that came before the House floor, including SB 8. I am also proud to be a lead signer on multiple amicus briefs submitted to the Supreme Court of the United States asking them to uphold Roe v. Wade. I'm an original co-sponsor of the women's health protection act and frankly I've been a tireless advocate of uplifting the horrendous stories of Texas women who are suffering from this deadly & draconian move made by our state legislature & supported by our Supreme Court. I support expanding the Court to restore balance to our judiciary.

**Question 12: How would you lead or support efforts to provide better funding for health care and better health care options for all Texas residents?**

JRMAR - When elected, my commitment to transforming healthcare for all Texas residents centers around the introduction of the 'HILA' (Healthcare Investment Literacy Act). This comprehensive initiative addresses the diverse challenges faced by different demographics, ensuring accessibility, affordability, and inclusivity in healthcare.

The 'HILA' Act encompasses vital programs for kids, offering tax benefits for gym memberships and additional vouchers to encourage regular exercise as a lifestyle choice. It is a holistic approach aimed at creating a healthier America from preschool to graduate school.

My leadership approach involves collaborative efforts with stakeholders to secure necessary resources, promote transparent governance, and champion a healthcare strategy that leaves no Texan behind. This initiative recognizes the disparities in funding priorities, emphasizing the redirection of resources to benefit the overall health and well-being of citizens.

Integral to the 'HILA' Act is the commitment to hold accountable those who profit from Americans not being healthy. By targeting the root causes of funding disparities and prioritizing a people-centric approach, we aim to reshape the landscape of healthcare, fostering a society where profit doesn't take precedence over the well-being of the people.

In conclusion, my vision for a healthier Texas is encapsulated in the 'HILA' Act, reflecting a commitment to education, investment, and care. Let us unite to 'Make America Health Again (MAHA)' by actively transforming our healthcare system, ensuring that the health of our citizens takes precedence over profit-driven motives.

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JARRED – Yes. I have several plans to tackle health for Texans. For example, we need to continue to work with ACA to expand coverage and get more uninsured Texans covered. That means we need to review the performance data of market place plans and coverage. I would take that information and create a solid agenda to ensure Texas have access to health care. Further, I plan to make sure we think about full range of healthcare needs, including mental health care needs, which we have traditionally treated differently.

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JASMINE - I believe healthcare is a human right and that it should be accessible in our communities when and where we are sick. As a member of Congress, I've leveraged my office to increase awareness about the different healthcare programs available through the federal government and have used our mobile office hours (an initiative I started during my first month in office) as an opportunity to partner with local agencies to provide information, sign folks up for coverage, and much more. I believe when you leave the doctor's office you should be able to recover without fearing how the bill can break your back. I support access to preventative healthcare and efforts to keep people healthy because an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. I support increasing investments in and expanding the ACA while we figure out a long term solution to healthcare access that boosts coverage to everyone, is not tied to employment, and includes dental, vision, mental, and the full spectrum of reproductive health. I support a policy to allow county judges and mayors to expand Medicaid in their jurisdiction and accept federal Medicaid funds even if their governors do not.

**Question 13: How would you lead or support an effort to establish universal or single payer health care for the United States of America? What improvements, if any, should be made to strengthen the Affordable Care Act?**

JRMAR - When elected, my commitment to transforming the healthcare landscape in the United States is anchored in the comprehensive 'HILA' (Healthcare Investment Literacy Act). This multifaceted initiative will serve as the cornerstone for leading and supporting efforts to establish universal or single-payer healthcare for the nation.

The 'HILA' Act addresses the diverse healthcare challenges faced by different demographics, promoting accessibility, affordability, and inclusivity. In collaboration with stakeholders, fellow lawmakers, and advocacy groups, I will actively engage in transparent governance to secure necessary resources and champion a people-centric healthcare strategy.

In tandem with advocating for universal healthcare, the 'HILA' Act complements the Affordable Care Act (ACA) by addressing the root causes of healthcare disparities. By emphasizing the redirection of resources to benefit the overall health and well-being of citizens, we aim to hold accountable those who profit from Americans not being healthy.

In essence, my vision for healthcare reform starts with the implementation of the 'HILA' Act, a transformative initiative that, when combined with efforts for universal healthcare, will create a healthcare system that truly serves and prioritizes the health of all Americans.

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JARRED – Yes, as a freshman, I will work with the ranking leadership to advance our health care agenda. First, we must work to protect ACA from Republican attack and destruction. The fight continues to just have such a law in place, not withstanding the shortcomings of the Act. I also would work with federal agencies to understand and therefore strategize on options to make the Act more effective while fighting to protect what is constantly under attack.

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JASMINE - I would organize. I think that's what's been missing. There has to be an inside/outside plan to bring about more awareness, understanding, buy-in and ultimately the pressure that's needed to move the needle. I believe healthcare is a human right and support universal health insurance coverage that is not tied to employment, and covers dental, vision, mental, and the full spectrum of reproductive health. I absolutely believe we should make improvements to the affordable care act as we explore a long term solution with the goal of universal healthcare. Earlier this year, the Biden Administration announced that the Department of Health and Human Services will propose a rule expanding eligibility that would allow Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients to enroll in health care coverage through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) marketplace and Medicaid. A 2021 survey of people with DACA found that 34 percent are living without any kind of health insurance, compared to ten percent of the total population. Now, hundreds of thousands of DACA recipients will have access to affordable health care, including the over 100,000 DACA recipients living in Texas. If the COVID-19 pandemic taught us anything, it's that public health can only be protected if every single American has access to good, quality healthcare.

**Question 14: How would you lead or support efforts to ensure the John Lewis Voting Rights Act is enacted?**

JRMAR - The Delma Banks Jr Voter Access Act, echoing the spirit of "No taxation without representation," becomes a powerful instrument in rectifying modern-day injustices. By addressing the voting rights of individuals with criminal convictions, the act aligns with democracy's foundational principles and dismantles systemic barriers perpetuating disenfranchisement. This act aims to restore voting rights and challenges the broader issue of taxation without full citizenship benefits. The idea that individuals, having served sentences, should contribute without enjoying full rights highlights the work needed for equal participation in the Republic of America.

Advocating for The Delma Banks Jr Voter Access Act and supporting the John Lewis Voting Rights Act affirms our commitment to an inclusive democracy. Every citizen should have the right to vote and shape the nation's future, aligning with justice, equality, and the belief that democracy thrives when all members have a voice. To lead or support these efforts, I'd advocate for comprehensive voting rights reforms federally and at state levels. These acts are critical in addressing systemic issues hindering democratic participation.

Inspired by my father's experience, The Delma Banks Jr Voter Access Act challenges voting restrictions tied to criminal convictions, addressing a grave injustice. It seeks to rectify the notion that individuals in the criminal justice system are modern-day slaves, contributing without the right to vote or enjoy full citizenship benefits. The act directly addresses the principle of "no taxation without representation," emphasizing representation for all, regardless of past, current, or future convictions. Additionally, it calls to address the 13th Amendment's impact on modern-day issues, moving to make it unconstitutional for a state to restrict voting or tax individuals based on voting rights.

In leading these efforts, I'd collaborate with lawmakers, community leaders, and advocacy groups. Raising awareness, garnering public support, and strategic advocacy will be crucial for navigating the legislative process and upholding democratic principles.

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JARRED – I would work very closely, under the leadership of Rep. Swell, support the full passage of this Act. This may include working across the aisle to find and garner support of this critical piece of legislation. As we know, this is a critical aspect of freedom that must be protected and measures must be codified to ensure Americans maintain unfettered access to the ballot box. Therefore, this is important work of Congress in coming sessions.

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JASMINE - I'm proud to say that I'm a cosponsor of the HR 14 - the John Lewis Voting Rights Act of 2023. As a former civil rights attorney, I know that voting is the most fundamental and sacred right we have and without voting rights we will never have healthcare, environment justice, abortion rights, LGBTQ+ equality, or anything else that matters to us.

In addition to the John Lewis Voting Rights Act, I'm proud to have introduced HR 4987, the Democracy Restoration Act, which is another piece of legislation that will expand access to the ballot box. This bill ensures that the right of a U.S. citizen to vote in any election for federal office shall not be denied or abridged because that individual has been convicted of a criminal offense unless, at the time of the election, such individual is serving a felony sentence. Additionally, it sets forth requirements for state and federal notification of individuals of the restoration of their voting rights.

**Question 15: Did the Build Back Better Act in your opinion do enough to address the nation's needs?**

JRMAR - No answer provided

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JARRED – I believe Build Back Better Act is a robust piece of legislation that makes a good start at addressing the needs of the Nation. I don't believe the Act is fully responsive to myriad of needs that we have. However, I believe the Act does provide much opportunity to facilitate positive changes that impact the daily lives of Americans. I believe as your elected official it is my primary job to comprehensively examine the Act to find opportunities specific to this District to address those needs we can.

JASMINE - I believe the Build Back Better Act is historic in its investments and a great first step to reversing course after four devastating years under Trump's failed leadership. During this Congress, we've seen major investments come down to our State and specifically, my District - investments that we otherwise wouldn't have seen if it wasn't for this legislation. Like any policy, I believe that there was definitely room for improvement and that there are many who will still desperately need relief as it relates to childcare, education debt, keeping their businesses open, and investing in the infrastructure we need.

**Question 16: Do you or do you not support ending the filibuster?**

JRMAR - I do not support either maintaining the filibuster in its current form or completely eliminating it. Instead, I advocate for modernizing the filibuster to address its criticisms and make the legislative process more fair and effective. This entails finding a balanced approach that protects minority rights, encourages bipartisanship, and maintains stability while addressing concerns about obstruction, democratic principles, historical misuse, and potential incentives for intransigence. The goal is to create a system that fosters cooperation and efficiency in decision-making while upholding democratic values and the integrity of the legislative process.

George Washington's cautionary words about the dangers of factionalism and prioritizing party interests over national unity serve as a reminder of the potential risks associated with political divisions. Modernizing the filibuster aligns with the spirit of promoting unity and preventing the erosion of public liberty, as articulated by Washington in his Farewell Address.

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JARRED - I fully support ending the filibuster in Congress.

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JASMINE - I do. Our freedoms are vanishing before our eyes because a minority of a minority of people in the Senate have been given the unreasonable leverage to hold a majority of America from progressing.

**Question 17: What specific ideas do you have and/or what current legislation would you support to strengthen and grow the US economy?**

JRMAR - As a congressman, my focus would be on comprehensive policies to strengthen and grow the U.S. economy. Here are specific ideas and potential legislative priorities:

Fairness in Family Finance Act: Implement policies addressing wealth inequality and promoting economic equity. Provide targeted support to ensure economic opportunities are accessible to all.

The GOD Act: Support legislation addressing addiction challenges and providing resources for individuals and families. Focus on solutions and services combating drug addiction to promote public health.

Peace Act: Advocate for policies prioritizing peace over endless wars. Redirect resources toward domestic priorities, emphasizing economic benefits in a stable international environment.

Rebuilding Family Structure: Promote initiatives strengthening family structures, recognizing their role in fostering a thriving economy. Support programs addressing societal challenges impacting families like education, healthcare, and housing. Economic Diversity: Encourage policies promoting economic diversity across sectors. Support initiatives bolstering key pillars of the American economy, including services, manufacturing, technology, finance, healthcare, energy, agriculture, and retail.

National Security and Self-Defense: Advocate for policies securing borders and protecting national security interests. Support a balanced approach engaging positively with the international community while ensuring self-defense capabilities.

Sustainable Trade Practices: Promote legislation encouraging domestic manufacturing and production. Advocate for fair trade practices, holding other nations accountable to shared values and emphasizing paying workers a living wage.

Infrastructure Investment: Support comprehensive infrastructure bills enhancing the country's transportation, energy,

and technology systems. Infrastructure investments can stimulate economic growth, create jobs, and improve competitiveness. Education and Workforce Development:

Advocate for policies investing in education and workforce development. Support initiatives aligning education with the needs of a rapidly evolving economy, fostering a skilled and adaptable workforce. Environmental Sustainability: Promote legislation investing in clean energy and sustainable practices. Support initiatives contributing to environmental conservation, creating jobs, and stimulating economic growth in emerging sectors.

These ideas reflect a commitment to addressing a broad spectrum of challenges and opportunities impacting the U.S. economy. Prioritizing fairness, inclusivity, and sustainability while leveraging the nation's economic diversity will be essential for fostering robust and enduring economic growth.

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JARRED - I believe that Build Back Better Act, Securing Jobs in Aviation, and the Inflation Reduction Act are three critical pieces of legislation that are already passed and intended to improve the economy. Like I referenced earlier, it is my job to not only write legislation that improves our condition, but my immediate duty to look deeply within these pieces of law and find economic solutions for the people of District 30. I am fully committed to that duty and I plan to spend a great deal of time finding economic solutions that will strengthen the economic position and condition of North Texans.

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JASMINE - As a member of Congress, everything that I do is centered around improving the overall economics of my District and the Country. 20% of my District's population sits at or below poverty and as such, I understand the issues facing my constituents when it comes to getting a quality job with a livable wage. I've worked closely with stakeholders across the District to expand workforce development opportunities while seeking out legislative solutions that'll help boost our overall economy. A big piece of our economy is making sure that we have good jobs which only comes when we do our job in sending down the necessary resources as legislators.

**Question 18: What could congress do to improve response and preparation for the next pandemic?**

JRMAR - No answer provided to this question

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JARRED - Yes, Congress has much opportunity to lead our nation in preparation for next pandemic. I strongly believe Congress has the responsibility to convene federal agency leadership from FEMA, NIH, CDC, WHO and others to make sure we understand the realities of the next pandemic and are prepared with a funded plan and accountability measures to respond and prevent in a way that protects Americans. We must require this of agency leadership.

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JASMINE - We must go back to being global leaders in medicine as we were under the Obama Administration. If President Trump had not pulled funding for studying and monitoring disease at the international level, we would have been in a far better position to detect and respond to this threat earlier and save millions of lives across the globe. Congress must act immediately to increase the public's awareness and understanding of this communicable disease as well as ways to prevent and protect ourselves from the spread. Laying this foundation now will combat disinformation early and before people lose their lives to harmful treatments like ivermectin and hydroxychloroquine. The pandemic highlights our most urgent need for universal healthcare access now.

In addition to this all, in the Inflation reduction act, there were provisions in there to do just this. After all, we experienced historic inflation as a result of the pandemic. The IRA increased research resources. There was an authorization for three multibillion-dollar facilities in this historic legislation. I am proud to report that I fought to get one of those three to district 30 & we won! TX30 is now home to an ARPA-H customer experience hub that will hopefully allow for more diverse trials to take place while increasing access to healthcare for those in the district.

**Question 19: 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?**

JRMAR - I do not support the implementation of mandatory sexual harassment and Equal Employment Opportunity training for members of Congress. Instead, I advocate for the removal of immunity for all government officials to ensure accountability for their actions. Due process exists for a reason, and legal proceedings should be the avenue for addressing any violations of the law. While I recognize the value of training, I believe it should be a personal initiative for elected officials, and equal employment opportunity training can be offered to enhance staff development. In the case of legal infractions, the appropriate forum should be a court of law, not a public spectacle. Transparency and honesty are crucial, and individuals must exercise discipline to avoid falling prey to wrongdoing. It's essential for leaders to uphold trust rather than exploiting it, and self-reflection on intentions is paramount. Ultimately, accountability should be pursued through legal channels rather than mandatory training mandates.

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JARRED - As an EEO professional, I would work with ranking leadership and my colleagues to craft and introduce legislation similar to that referenced in the question. To me, the key is first understanding how this training affects the issues within the House and allow legislation to flow from that need. This is experience allows the legislation to gain the momentum and clarifies the needs and therefore requires action.

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JASMINE - Yes!

**Question 20: 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)**

JRMAR - No answer provided on this question

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JARRED - I'd work with leaders on this Act to understand what are its legislative successes and shortcomings. This bipartisan piece of legislation undoubtedly has opportunity for reform and improvement. I support the Act, but I am also fully committed to understanding and taking steps to make sure it provides the protections and opportunities it was intended to.

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JASMINE - Immigrants are what make District 30 and the US a vibrant and strong place. We must dedicate ourselves to creating a real path for citizenship that protects DREAMers, those with TPS, and allows those currently undocumented to acquire legal status and a pathway to citizenship. Currently, immigrants must wait almost thirty years in limbo to become citizens and enjoy the full rights and privileges enshrined under our US Constitution. This is unacceptable, unfair, and ultimately deprives our country of hardworking, top talent and upstanding community members. Our immigration system needs to be one of compassion and efficiency not discrimination and delay. The goal of our immigration system should be to screen for credible threats to national security, not to keep people out based on creed or origin. As it relates to DREAMers, those who arrived here as kids and grew up in our backyard, contribute to our society, and call America the only home they've known — we must do what is right and grant them citizenship. We must also ensure a pathway to citizenship for their parents and do our best to keep families intact.

**B. Temporary Protected Status (TPS)**

JRMAR - No answer provided on this question

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JARRED - I believe TPS is long proven tool to offer a path to citizenship. I know other administrations have worked to eliminate such paths, however, I am fully committed to reviewing the performance of this program to improve it and ensure it effectively does what is designed to do. Additionally, it may be time to make sure this program is taking into account the geopolitical landscape and realities that leads to US migration.

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JASMINE - TPS must be protected and extended for those who are here because of untenable circumstances in their home country. These are folks making an honest living, giving back to our communities, paying taxes, and building our country up. I'm consistently approached by the business community asking that we get smarter on immigration because they need the work force. As a member of the Agriculture committee this is a constant refrain, especially in Texas. There is no good reason to turn them away or send anyone back to instability.

A couple of weeks ago, I led a letter with my colleague, Joaquin Castro (TX-20), Texas Congressional Democrats, and members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus urging the U.S. Department of Justice to use its authority to prevent the state of Texas from enforcing Texas Senate Bill 4 (SB 4), an unconstitutional and dangerous bill that would authorize state law enforcement and judicial authorities to obstruct federal immigration law. Additionally, I led a letter cosigned by Texas Congressional Democrats to the DOJ in early December 2023, calling on the DOJ to provide federal oversight on the reported abuses by our state under Operation LoneStar. As a member of Congress, I'll continue to advocate for and ensuring protections for those under TPS and streamlining the process for attaining green cards and citizenship to maintain a lawful presence in America.

**Question 21: What are your ideas to respond to evidence of climate change?**

JRMAR - In response to evidence of climate change, my approach goes beyond traditional environmental policies. It involves a comprehensive strategy addressing climate change while fostering stronger family structures and promoting sustainable living. Here are the key components of my plan:

Strengthening Family Structures: Implement initiatives to support and strengthen family units, including initiatives to bring fathers back into homes. Recognize the importance of stable families as the cornerstone of a healthy society.

Support for Families: Advocate for policies providing comprehensive support for families, including parental leave, affordable childcare, and healthcare. Work towards creating an environment prioritizing the well-being of families.

Collaboration between Departments: Facilitate collaboration between the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Education. Develop programs teaching students essential skills for independence, including sustainable living practices.

Reforestation and Sustainable Agriculture: Launch large-scale reforestation projects to combat climate change and enhance biodiversity. Encourage sustainable agriculture practices promoting food security and reducing the carbon footprint.

One-Income American Dream: Work towards an economic model allowing families to live the American dream on a single income. Promote policies reducing the need for daily commuting, resulting in fewer cars on the road.

Investment in American Innovation: Support innovation in the energy sector, focusing on American-made technologies. Explore alternative energy sources, including American Solar and Black Matter Zero Point energy.

Education for Sustainable Living: Incorporate environmental education into school curricula, emphasizing the importance of sustainable living. Encourage communities to adopt eco-friendly practices and reduce their environmental impact. By addressing climate change within the broader context of family, education, and sustainable living, we can create a more resilient and environmentally conscious society. This approach not only tackles the immediate challenges of climate change but also invests in the long-term well-being of our communities and the planet.

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JARRED - I believe the science is clear, we have climate change. As your Congressman, I plan to make sure we are taking steps federally, that impact us locally, to deal with the effects of climate change. This reality has door-to-door consequences to the people of North Texas. This ranges from employees who work outside, to school age children, the elderly, the unhoused. This also impacts how we must think about infrastructure projects and needs.

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JASMINE - I'm proud to say that in my first year as a member of Congress, I've worked closely with the EPA and our Regional Administrator to pull down on much needed funding for brownfield and superfund sites, sites that overwhelming exist in my District and have a negative impact on the quality of life for our neighbors living in the respective areas. Unfortunately, you can look at different parts of my District and see the plague of environmental

discrimination - I'm committed to ensuring that we continue to prioritize investments that will right the wrongs of yesterday while thinking ahead at innovative solutions to mitigate the carbon footprint and reduce our dependency on fossil fuels. Climate change is a most pressing issue with a strict timeline that can only be exacerbated by the increase in carbon emissions we see. In addition to the funding aspects of this issues, I'll continue to support policies to achieve net zero carbon emissions, while creating clean energy jobs, retraining those currently working in the energy sector for the green jobs or tomorrow to ensure no one is left behind.

**Question 22: 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?**

JRMAR - No answer provided on this question

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JARRED - Not really, just to say, I am committed public servant that is product of District 30. I plan to go Washington and commit myself for doing the best work for ALL of my District.

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JASMINE - No

**Question 23: How would you showcase your endorsement by Stonewall Democrats of Dallas if received? Would you include the endorsement in your campaign media?**

JRMAR - If honored with the endorsement from Stonewall Democrats of Dallas, I would prominently feature it in various campaign materials and media: Campaign Media: The endorsement would be highlighted in brochures, pamphlets, and promotional videos to communicate support from the LGBTQ+ community. Campaign Website: A dedicated section on my website would showcase the endorsement, providing information and testimonials to underscore my commitment to inclusivity. Email Campaigns: Regular campaign updates and newsletters would include mentions of the endorsement, ensuring continuous communication with supporters.

Text Messages: Short and impactful messages would feature the endorsement, reaching a broad audience through direct communication. Political Advertisements: Public Speaking Engagements: Social Media: Regular posts across social platforms would showcase the endorsement using visuals, hashtags, and compelling messages to maximize engagement. This strategy reflects my commitment to fostering inclusive representation and resonating with the values of LGBTQ+ Americans.

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JARRED - Yes.

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JASMINE - I will proudly showcase my endorsement, just as I did last cycle, on my website, social media, campaign literature, mail, and anywhere else I can! Stonewall has done the work to make sure this endorsement holds real value with the voters, and I hope to earn your endorsement again and build upon our strong partnership.

**Question 24: 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?**

JRMAR - I am not a current member of Stonewall Democrats of Dallas. However, I recognize the importance of engaging with diverse communities and understanding their perspectives. While I may not be a member at this moment, I am open to joining before the endorsement screenings to actively participate in the organization's activities and gain insights into the concerns and priorities of LGBTQ+ Americans.

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JARRED - Yes, I will pledge to join before screenings.

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JASMINE - I've been a member since 2018 and will continue my membership as I value the mission of Stonewall.

**This completes the questions and answers for this race.**