

TRANS UNITED



Trans United Fund 2016 Presidential Candidate Questionnaire

Dear Presidential Candidate:

There are approximately 1.6 million trans US residents, many of whom will vote in the 2016 presidential election. Trans people live in every state and territory in our Nation, and though we are frequently subject to discrimination and harassment, we are resilient and strong. Like everyone else, trans US residents want to work hard, be treated with dignity, protect our families, and pursue the American Dream. We are not alone. Our families – both families of origin and our chosen families – stand with us. For more and more people, standing with the trans community has become a defining and powerfully motivating call.

As more and more Americans come to know us, that support only grows. As you well know, change is slow and the consequences of that pace could not be more consequential to our communities, as demonstrated by the statistics on HIV and suicide among trans people presented below. The transgender community has faced endemic levels of violence and discrimination. Today, even as more and more of us come out, elected officials and candidates for office from Washington to North Carolina, have borrowed from the most shameful chapters of our nation's history. These leaders have chosen to exploit ignorance, to appeal to fear, and to demonize us. While all of us suffer, the consequences are most profound for the most vulnerable among us – young people, trans women of color, immigrants and others. Yet in this same moment, we are witnessing profound and positive change. Today in America we truly stand at a crossroads. At Trans United Fund, we know the power that leaders like you have to impact both the course we take and the length of the journey. As trans people that come from all walks of life, we know that lives and the dreams of so many hang in the balance. We know that some would prefer that were silent in this moment. We know that courage in public life is as rare as it is profoundly challenging. Yet know our history. We remember when HIV/AIDS was ravaging thousands upon thousands of US residents and we remember the consequences of our elected leader's silence. We have learned that still today, silence equals death.

We are grateful for your service and we are grateful for your willingness to participate in this questionnaire. We also understand that not everyone is familiar with the terms and concepts the trans community uses to define ourselves. We define trans in a broad sense that includes both transgender people and gender nonconforming people. It has been and continues to be a journey for many us and imagine it may be for you as well. For context, a trans woman is a person who identifies and presents

themselves as a woman and whose assigned sex at birth is male, and a trans man is a person who identifies and presents themselves as a man and whose assigned sex at birth is female. Some trans identified people don't identify as male or female, identifying somewhere along or even outside of the binary. This is particularly true of young people, some of the most vulnerable members of our community. Transition is an individualized process through which a person changes their social, legal, or physical characteristics to be consistent with their internal gender. Not all trans people transition although we believe all trans people should have the right and access to care they need to do so if they so choose. We are happy to discuss any of these ideas or any of the questions that are outlined below further with you or the appropriate staff.

Here are some facts about our community from the groundbreaking [Injustice at Every Turn](#) report by the National Center for Transgender Equality and the National LGBTQ Task Force, based on a survey of nearly 7,000 trans people across the country.¹

- Trans people live in extreme poverty. We are nearly four times more likely to have a household income of less than \$10,000 per year compared to the general population.
- A staggering 41% of trans people have attempted suicide compared to 1.6% of the general population.
- Those who were openly trans or gender non-conforming while in grades K-12 reported alarming rates of harassment (78%), physical assault (35%) and sexual violence (12%). This harassment was so severe that it led almost one-sixth (15%) to leave a school in K-12 settings or in higher education.
- Trans people experience unemployment at twice the rate of the general population, with rates for trans people of color up to four times the national unemployment rate.
- Ninety percent (90%) of trans people report experiencing harassment, mistreatment or discrimination on the job, or took actions like hiding who they are to avoid such mistreatment, and over one-quarter (26%) reported that they had lost a job due to being trans.
- Trans people that are undocumented non-citizens report more jobs lost due to bias (39%) and three times higher physical assault at work (25%).
- Nearly one in five (19%) trans people report being refused medical care due to their trans status, with even higher numbers among people of color in the survey.

¹ Grant, Jaime M., Lisa A. Mottet, Justin Tanis, Jack Harrison, Jody L. Herman, and Mara Keisling. *Injustice at Every Turn: A Report of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey*. Washington: National Center for Transgender Equality and National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, 2011. Available at: http://www.transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/resources/NTDS_Report.pdf

- More than one in five (22%) of trans people who have interacted with police report harassment by police, with much higher rates reported by trans people of color. More than half of black trans people who interacted with police reported either harassment or assault.
- Trans people experience over four times the national average of HIV infection, with rates higher among trans people of color. One quarter (24.9%) of Black trans people reported HIV infection, compared to 2.4% of the general Black population, a more than 10-fold increase. In addition, the CDC reports that trans people, and in particularly trans people of color, face the highest rate of new HIV infections among those tested.²
- Just this week in Rockville, Maryland, Keyonna Blakeney, a young Black trans woman was murdered. She is the 9th trans person to be murdered this year, the majority of whom are trans women of color. The names of the others are: Monica Loera, Jasmine Sierra, Kayden Clarke, Demarkis Stansberry, Nadine Stransen, Kourtney Yochum, Maya Young, and Shante Thompson.

In an effort to inform the trans community and our members of your policy priorities and concerns, Trans United Fund has developed this presidential candidate's questionnaire. Our questionnaire addresses many of the issues that we believe are the most important to trans people, our families, and our allies.

Trans United Fund is committed to building the political power of trans communities and our allies to advocate for a bold and unapologetic commitment to full equality for trans communities.

Trans United Fund accomplishes this mission through engaging trans communities and our allies in the political process, building the political leadership and capacity of trans people and allies, and endorsing candidates with a commitment to trans equality and a pro-trans platform.

Candidates seeking the support of the trans community must go above and beyond support for basic issues of LGBTQ equality, such as non-discrimination. Candidates must demonstrate proactive commitment to positively impacting the issues that disproportionately affect trans and gender expansive communities, including mass incarceration and detention, HIV/AIDS, racial and gender profiling, immigration, violence, education access, unemployment, housing, and healthcare disparities.

Trans United Fund is a nonpartisan 501(c)(4) organization and is organized around the belief that endorsement and community support must be earned through both a commitment to and demonstration of support for trans people.

We look forward to sharing your responses!

² CDC. *HIV testing at CDC-funded sites, United States, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands, 2010*. September 2012. Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/resources/reports/pdf/PEB_2010_HIV_Testing_Report.pdf

CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

(Please attach additional sheets if you wish to provide any additional context to the questions below.)

1. BACKGROUND

- a. Do you consider yourself an ally to the trans community? YES/NO
- b. Do you support full legal equality for trans people? YES/NO
- c. Do you understand the trans community to be Is expansive and diverse, including transgender people; binary and nonbinary people; gender nonconforming, gender expansive, and genderqueer people; and people with a transsexual history? YES/NO
- d. Have you ever hired a trans person to work for you in a government or business context? YES/NO
- e. Do you know any trans people personally? YES/NO
- f. Generally, how familiar are you with issues affecting trans communities?

- VERY FAMILIAR
- SOMEWHAT FAMILIAR
- NOT VERY FAMILIAR
- NOT AT ALL FAMILIAR

- f. What are the top 3 issues you want to address to improve the lives of trans people?

- g. What is your most significant achievement to date that has improved the lives of trans people?

- h. Nonbinary and gender expansive people are frequently excluded in policy-making and programs concerning trans populations. How would you ensure that these communities are included in federal rules, reports, and activities?

2. BASIC LEGAL EQUALITY FOR TRANS PEOPLE

- a. Should trans people have the right to live, work, receive an education, and participate in public life without discrimination and harassment? YES/NO
- b. Would you uphold Executive Orders and federal agency rules which provide for non-discrimination protections for trans people in accessing government services, for contractors and grantees, and in federal employment? YES/NO
- c. Do you support the Equality Act (S.1858/H.R. 3185), or other federal legislation which will provide basic non-discrimination protections in areas like employment, housing, education, and public accommodations for trans people? YES/NO
- d. Do you support the Student Non-Discrimination Act (S.439/H.R. 846), federal legislation which will provide basic non-discrimination protections for trans students in K-12 schools? YES/NO
- e. Do you support the Safe Schools Improvement Act (S.311/H.R. 2902), federal legislation which will provide basic anti-bullying protections for students in K-12 schools? YES/NO
- f. Do you support the Therapeutic Fraud Prevention Act (H.R. 2450), federal legislation to protect LGBTQ people from dangerous and discredited conversion therapy? YES/NO
- g. Basic Non-Discrimination Protections
 - i. Have you ever voted for basic non-discrimination protections for trans people? YES/NO
 - ii. Have you ever voted against basic non-discrimination protections for trans people? YES/NO
 - iii. Please provide any relevant context for the above, include the year and any bill numbers.

- h. Will you support and uphold administrative rulings by the US Equal Employment Opportunities Commission (EEOC) and the US Department of Education that classify discrimination against trans people as discrimination on the basis of sex? YES/NO
- i. Do you support rules for allowing trans servicemembers to transition, socially and medically, and to be protected from discrimination? YES/NO

- j. Only 19 states plus DC have state laws that specifically provide basic non-discrimination protection to trans people. How would you ensure that these vital protections are extended across our Nation?

k. Sex-Segregated Facilities

- i. Do you oppose legislative efforts to prevent trans people from using sex-segregated facilities in accordance with their lived gender? YES/NO
- ii. Do you oppose school district policies which would stigmatize trans Students or prevent them from using facilities in accordance with their lived gender? YES/NO
- iii. Do you believe that basic non-discrimination laws for trans people applicable to employment, housing, public accommodations, and education will put anyone at increased risk in sex-segregated facilities? YES/NO
- iv. Do you support the creation/designation of gender neutral restrooms in all appropriate federal buildings? YES/NO
- v. How would you oppose efforts to prevent trans people from making appropriate use of public facilities based on their lived gender?

l. Religious Refusals

- i. Do you oppose efforts to undermine non-discrimination protections for trans people by creating broad religious refusal provisions? YES/NO
- ii. Can you explain your general philosophy regarding religious protections and what role they should have when considering protections for trans communities?

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- m. Healthcare
- i. Do you support non-discrimination protections in healthcare access and services for trans people? YES/NO
 - ii. Do you support access for trans people to medically-necessary transition-related healthcare, as defined by the World Professional Association for Transgender Health (WPATH) and support by the American Medical Association and the American Psychological Association? YES/NO
 - iii. Do you support access for trans people to medically-necessary transition-related healthcare regardless of their gender presentation? YES/NO
 - iv. Do you support explicit federal rules that prohibit third-party insurers from exempting transition-related services from plans? YES/NO
 - v. Do you support clear and financially appropriate Medicare coverage for transition-related healthcare? YES/NO
 - vi. Do you support coverage of medically-necessary transition-related healthcare for trans veterans, including access to surgery? YES/NO
 - vii. Increasing access to healthcare coverage for the trans community has not yet led to increasing access to care or quality of care. How would you ensure that trans people have access to appropriate, knowledgeable, linguistically accessible, and culturally competent healthcare?
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- n. Identity Documents
- i. Do you support rules by the Social Security Administration and the State Department which have allow trans people to appropriately change their legal name and assigned gender to match their lived identity? YES/NO
 - ii. Are you in favor of gender self-determination in identity documents? YES/NO
 - iii. Do you support removal of gender markers from any identity document where such information is not relevant? YES/NO
 - iv. How would you encourage states and other federal agencies to streamline name and gender change processes for trans people?
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3. ISSUES THAT DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACT TRANS PEOPLE

- a. Inclusion in Government Programs and Funding – Currently trans people are excluded from many sources of government funding or not explicitly included in government contracts, grants, and programs like other underserved communities. How would you ensure that trans people are fully and equally included in federal government activities?

- b. Do you support trans people as being designated as a Medically Underserved Population? YES/NO
- c. Do you support trans people as being designated as a minority population for purposes of small business rules and programs? YES/NO
- d. Do you support trans people as being designated as a target population for purposes of federal workforce training and diversity programs? YES/NO
- e. Inclusion in Government Data Collection – Currently trans people are excluded from many federal surveys and other critical data collection efforts, which are necessary to fully understand the disparities faced by this population. How would you ensure that trans people are fully and equally included in federal data collection efforts?

i. There are currently no federal surveys or data collection efforts that capture information about gender nonconforming people. Do you support adding relevant questions to capture data about this population to federal surveys? YES/NO

f. Employment – Trans people, particularly trans people of color, face staggering levels of unemployment and underemployment, even when the economy is strong. How would you improve employment opportunities for trans people?

g. Workplace Discrimination – Trans people often face employment and workplace discrimination as well as challenges with workplace facilities. How would you improve workplace conditions for trans people?

- h. Violence – Trans people, particularly trans women of color, face disproportionately high levels of violence, including hate crime violence, street violence, intimate partner violence, and suicide. How would you work to address this epidemic of violence?

- i. HIV and Other STIs – Trans people, particularly trans people of color, face exceedingly high risk for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Moreover, trans communities have a disproportionate rate of people living with HIV. How would you work to address HIV and other STIs among trans communities?

- i. Do you support removing trans people from the Men who have Sex with Men (MSM) category and establishing federal programs and funds designated for trans populations? YES/NO
- ii. Despite the disparate impact of HIV on trans communities, data on the prevalence of HIV among trans people is limited. Data concerning trans men is almost entirely unavailable. Do you support increased efforts to capture and publish accurate data about the rate of HIV among trans populations? YES/NO
- iii. Do you support reopening the National HIV/AIDS Strategy (NHAS) to YES/NO

address the gap in trans-focused HIV services and programs?

- iv. Too often people with HIV face unfair criminalization or sentence enhancements for activities that are proscribed, even though they pose little to no risk for viral transmission. In fact, such criminalization can discourage testing and treatment, and thereby increase the risk of HIV infection. What would you do to reduce criminalization of people with HIV?

- j. Law Enforcement – Trans people, particularly trans people of color, face disproportionate rates of negative interaction with law enforcement, arrest, and profiling, detention, and imprisonment, particularly for victimless crimes. Research shows that nearly half of trans people fear to approach law enforcement officials when they are the victim of a crime. How would you address discrimination by law enforcement systems and work to reduce the negative impact of these systems on trans communities?

- i. Do you support the legalization of consensual sex work? YES/NO

- k. Incarceration – Trans people are disproportionately more likely to face discrimination, be subject to solitary confinement, and face sexual abuse in prison, jail, and detention

systems. How would you reduce incarceration of trans people, prevent discrimination against trans prisoners, and mitigate violence against trans prisoners?

I. Immigration – Trans immigrants face higher barriers to emigrate to the US, to obtain asylum, to obtaining appropriate healthcare, and to find work that allows them to remain in the US. Moreover, trans people that are subject to immigration-related detention face staggering rates of violence and sexual abuse. How would you work to ensure trans migrant populations are properly cared for in the US

- i. Do you support streamlining the asylum process and making it more accessible to vulnerable populations, like trans people, who face persecution in their countries? YES/NO
- ii. Do you support access for undocumented immigrants to basic identification that reflects their lived name and gender? YES/NO
- iii. Do you support access to medically-necessary healthcare, including transition-related healthcare, pregnancy and abortion care, and HIV-related healthcare, for undocumented immigrants? YES/NO
- iv. Do you support exempting populations at disproportionate risk, like YES/NO

trans people, from non-criminal detention quotas for undocumented people?

- v. Do you support repeal of arbitrary detention quotas that target and endanger immigrants, particularly trans and other vulnerable immigrants? YES/NO

m. Foreign Policy

- i. Do you support requiring government contractors and grantees to globally adopt trans-inclusive non-discrimination policies? YES/NO
- ii. Do you support the December 2011 Presidential Memorandum to promote and protect the human rights of LGBTQ people through US diplomacy and foreign assistance work? YES/NO
- iii. How would you proactively work to advance the human rights of trans people abroad?

- n. Emergency Services – How will you ensure that federal emergency services such as FEMA, which responds to environmental disasters such as flooding and contamination, serves trans people in a responsive and culturally competent way?

4. POLICIES AND PRACTICES OF THE CAMPAIGN

- a. Does your campaign have a non-discrimination policy that applies to gender identity and expression? YES/NO
- b. Does your campaign have a transition policy for trans campaign staff? YES/NO
- c. Does your campaign employ any openly trans staff? YES/NO
How many? _____
- d. How does your staff prioritize recruitment of trans staff?

- e. Does your campaign provide trans-inclusive healthcare benefits for staff? YES/NO
Trans-inclusive healthcare includes coverage of all medically-necessary transition-related healthcare for all staff that work more than 30 hours/week.

5. ADVANCING TRANS EQUALITY IN OFFICE

- a. Will you meet with Trans United Fund members and other trans leaders within your first 100 days in office? YES/NO
- b. How would you use the office of the President of the United States to improve the health, safety, and well-being of trans people?

c. How would you advance pro-trans policies and legislation given the difficulty in passing legislation through Congress?

d. How would you prioritize the appointment and recruitment of trans people in your administration as president?
