



Candidate Questionnaire 2015

Instructions: Please return questionnaire via email, fax, or mail:

Email: JamesParrish@EAdvocates.org

Fax: 804-643-1554

Mail: 530 East Main St Suite 600
Richmond, VA 23219

Purpose: Thank you for taking the time to fill out the Equality Virginia Advocates candidate questionnaire. The questionnaire will help our supporters, the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community, and its allies know where candidates stand on issues important to them. Your returned questionnaire will also serve as part of the evaluation process for EVPAC's Board in regards to endorsements.

Publication: Your answers are "on the record" and will be circulated to all members of the EVPAC Board, and may be shared outside the organization and published to the EV Advocates website.

Candidate and Campaign Information:

Name: Friends of Gary McCollum

Address: P.O. Box 61245, Virginia Beach, VA 23462

Phone: (757) 632-0295

Email: Gary.McCollum@gmccollum.com

Campaign Website: www.gmccollum.com

Campaign Manager: Molly Ritner

Campaign Manager Phone/Email: (757) 632-0295, Ritner@gmccollum.com

Race and Election Information

Office Sought: Senate District 07

City, County or District of office:

Select One: X Challenger ___ Incumbent ___ Open Seat

Positions

- A. Equality Virginia asks all General Assembly members to sign a [statement](#) that they do not discriminate in their office based on sexual orientation or gender identity. If you are an incumbent, have you signed EV's nondiscrimination statement [[check here](#)]? If you are not, will you sign the nondiscrimination statement if elected? Please include other actions you and your office take to create an open and inclusive workplace for gay and transgender employees.**

Absolutely. It is important that we're protecting all workers regardless of their race, gender identity, or sexual orientation. Our campaign upholds these principles. This is my first time running for office however, as an executive I have always had an open door policy. I believe that employees should be able to bring their whole self to the workplace and thus the office needs to be a place where everyone is welcome. People should be judged based on their qualifications and aptitude, not on their sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.

- B. Please describe your level of support for the following issues that are legislative priorities for Equality Virginia.**

- 1. Protecting public employees from discrimination based on their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.**

I am strongly in support. In order for Virginia to thrive in a global economy we need to make sure everyone feels welcome here regardless of their race, age, gender identity or sexual orientation. Our public employees must be protected from discrimination based on their real or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

- 2. Ensuring that LGBT Virginians have equal access to public accommodations and housing.**

I am strongly in support. When elected, I will support efforts ensure that everyone has equal access to public accommodation and housing. I will support non-discrimination legislation on the state level and encourage our federal representatives to support similar measures on the federal level. Legislation that restricts access to necessary resources based on one's sexual orientation or gender identity is an overt violation of LGBT citizens' civil rights.

C. Please describe your level of support for the following issues that are important to EV and Virginia's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and allied community.

1. Banning "conversion therapy" practiced on LGBT minors.

Absolutely. Sexual orientation is not a choice. Programs such as these reinforce the notion that sexuality and gender identity are somehow alterable; this is a destructive and inaccurate portrayal of LGBT individuals. These programs are harmful to our entire community by making minors feel as if they must hide a part of themselves from our community. We are at our best when our entire community feels safe and secure expressing themselves.

2. Protecting all LGBT Virginians from discrimination in the workplace.

Absolutely. As I mentioned above, if Virginia is going to compete in a global economy we need all of our citizens actively engaging in the workforce. The workforce will only reach its maximum efficiency and capacity if there is legislation to ensure that no one is discriminated against based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Moreover, we need to ensure that all workers are free from harassment and policing in the workplace to preserve the dignity and individuality of LGBT individuals.

3. Removing the Marshall Newman Marriage Amendment from the Virginia Constitution.

Yes. While the courts have already struck down this legislation, it is important that Virginia is a place where everyone feels welcome. I will strongly support legislation to repeal the Marshall-Newman Amendment to the VA Constitution in an effort to afford LGBT members of the community the same marriage privileges as their straight counterparts.

D. Provide any additional information regarding your involvement in or support for the LGBT community.

As a business and community leader I have been supportive of the LGBT community. As I mentioned above, I am a firm believer that the more people we involve in our community the better we become as a society. In my campaign we have tried to actively participate in LGBT events including LGBT Pride in Norfolk and the HRBOR business networking events. I look forward to continuing to work with the LGBT community and to work together to make Hampton Roads and the state of Virginia an open and welcoming community for all.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. If you have any questions, please contact Equality Virginia Advocates at 804-643-4816 or JamesParrish@EAdvocates.org.