



Candidate Questionnaire 2017

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

Email: JamesParrish@EVAdvocates.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: John J. Bell

Address: PO Box 223822, Chantilly, VA 20153

Phone: 571-367-9080

Email: info@johnbellfordelegate.com

Campaign Website: www.johnbellfordelegate.com

Campaign Manager: Jacqueline Hixson

Campaign Manager Phone/Email: 770-362-2408 / jhixson@johnbellfordelegate.com

Race and Election Information

Office Sought: House of Delegates, District 87

City, County or District of office:

Select One: 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.**

I do my best to ensure both my legislative and campaign offices are open and inclusive to all people, no matter their race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity. I choose staff based on their abilities, knowledge and potential; personal details are not a factor. In my 2015 campaign, I was proud to have both gay and transgender members on my paid staff. To me, discrimination is discrimination, plain and simple. There's no excuse for a place of employment to be anything but all-inclusive and welcoming to all.

- 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 strongly support adding gender identity and sexual orientation to the list of protected classes under public employment nondiscrimination laws. In 2016, I co-patroned HB 179, which would have outlawed discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation in employment practices. I also recently was one of the co-signers of a letter to to the Prince William School Board encouraging the adoption of an anti-discrimination policy.

- 2. Protecting LGBT Virginians from discrimination in housing.**

I strongly support discrimination protections for LGBT Virginians in terms of housing. I copatroned HB 300 in 2016, which would have added gender identity and sexual orientation as protected classes from discrimination in housing.

- 3. Protecting LGBT Virginians from discrimination in public accommodations.**

While I did not get a chance to vote on bills such as Del. Bob Marshall's Physical Privacy Act, I vehemently oppose such bills. Every Virginian should feel comfortable using the facilities in which they are most comfortable, and legislators shouldn't stand in the way of that for the sake of "safety." I also recently was one of the co-signers of a letter to to the Prince William School Board encouraging the adoption of an anti-discrimination policy.

- 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.**

Again, I did not get a chance to vote on this legislation as it was killed in subcommittee, but I am very much in favor of outlawing conversion therapy on minors. Forcing this "treatment" on children against their will to try to change who they naturally are is unconscionable, and I will be a strong advocate for LGBT minors in Virginia who are being subjugated to this horror.

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

As stated above, I strongly support adding gender identity and sexual orientation to the list of protected classes under employment nondiscrimination laws. In 2016, I copatroned HB 179, which would have outlawed discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation in employment practices.

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

I have copatroned several bills and constitutional amendments (2016 HB 1395 and HB 5; 2017 HJ 538) that would repeal the statutory requirement in Virginia's Constitution for marriage to be defined as between one man and one woman. Even though Obergefell v. Hodges nullifies this portion of our Constitution, it still has no place in an inclusive, equal society. I ran against Del. Marshall in 2009 and constantly spoke against Marshall Newman throughout the campaign.

4. Support for policies in Virginia's public schools protecting students, teachers, and staff from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

I support policies for Virginia's public schools to protect all students, faculty and staff from discrimination. I recently sent a letter to the Prince William County School Board in support of adding gender identity and sexual orientation to their list of protected classes from discrimination, which the Board approved just this week.

5. Opposition to religious exemption bills that exceed the constitutional protection of freedom of religion and provide a license to discriminate against LGBT people.

In 2016, I was horrified that HB 773, the "Kim Davis" bill, passed the House of Delegates despite me and my colleagues' no-votes. I am very opposed to personal religious beliefs taking precedent over governmental obligations, and granting this license to discriminate would severely hurt Virginia.

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

Since my first campaign in 2009, I have been a strong advocate for equality for all Virginians. I was the first campaign in Virginia to have sexual orientation and gender identity equality as issues on my website and in my campaign. During my career in the Air Force, it didn't matter who you loved, what God you prayed to, or what political party you were; what mattered was that we completed the mission. I carry that same sense of equality for all in my service in the General Assembly.

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