



In Virginia and across the US, the business community has played a critical role in the advancement of equal rights for LGBT individuals and families over the last decade. And in states that considered harmful legislation this year, business leaders standing up for the rights of their employees have had a meaningful policy impact.

As business leaders, you have rightly recognized that supporting LGBT employees and their families is not just the right thing to do – it’s good for business. We are extremely grateful for that support and are asking you to once again stand for fairness as you consider your involvement in the upcoming Virginia statewide election.

The race for Attorney General will have a particularly profound impact on your LGBT employees and the Virginia business environment. It is why we are asking you to strongly oppose the candidacy of John Adams, a candidate far outside the mainstream whose anti-equality agenda would cause unique damage to thousands of Virginia families as Attorney General.

During this campaign and in the past, Adams has made clear that he will pursue efforts to undermine equal rights as Attorney General. He has continued to vocally oppose marriage equality, even after the Supreme Court decision in Obergefell v. Hodges.¹ This includes his extremist call to impeach the current Attorney General for supporting marriage equality² (a step that the very conservative Virginia House of Delegates didn’t even seriously consider.)

He has aggressively criticized efforts to protect the rights of transgender individuals³, including his apparent support for the widely criticized ban on military service⁴.

And earlier this year in a speech, he argued for allowing archaic state sodomy laws⁵. These laws, which have been rejected by most Republicans and Democrats for many years, would make it a crime to be gay in Virginia. Adams is not just opposed to advancing gay rights, he wants to allow government to actively persecute gay Virginians simply because of who they are. An Attorney General with this type of discriminatory and outdated agenda would send a terrible message about Virginia’s business climate.

¹ Adams website and press releases

² Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/virginia-politics/candidate-for-va-ag-wants-to-take-politics-out-of-the-office-sound-familiar/2017/07/04/da7d7a64-5aa3-11e7-9b7d-14576dc0f39d_story.html

³ Adams website and press releases

⁴ Adams Facebook Post, <https://www.facebook.com/JohnAdamsforVA/posts/863220223832952>

⁵ Adams speech March 21, 2107

To be clear: Groups supporting Adams for Attorney General will be sending a hostile message to LGBT employees and hurting Virginia's business-friendly reputation. It is our belief that Adams would use the Attorney General's office to pursue his own personal anti-equality agenda.

Thank you again for your commitment to equality. Working together, I believe we can continue to make Virginia an even better place to live, work and start a business – no matter whom you love.

Sincerely,

James Parrish
Executive Director
Equality Virginia Advocates