



Equality Virginia Advocates

Candidate Questionnaire for 2019 Statewide Elections

www.evadvocates.org

Candidate & Campaign

Name: Ryan C. Benton

Campaign Website: www.bentonforportsmouth.com

Office Sought: 80th District Delegate

Locality: Portsmouth

Candidate Type: Seeking an Open Seat

Candidate Answers

1. Do you support legislation protecting Virginians from discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity:

- For Employment: Yes
- For Housing: Yes
- For Public Accommodations: Yes



2. Please describe your level of support for the following issues that are important to Equality Virginia and Virginia's LGBTQ and Allied community:

- Banning sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts practiced on minors by licensed professionals: As someone who attended Exodus International programming as a teen, I fully support banning any sort of reparative therapy for minors. I know first-hand how damaging this type of programming can be.
- Support for affirming policies in Virginia's public schools for LGBTQ students: Our public schools need to be inclusive and welcoming for all students. I fully support affirming policies for LGBTQ students.
- Opposition to religious exemption bills that exceed the constitutional protection of freedom of religion and provide a license to discriminate against LGBTQ people: While I understand the need to protect the Freedom of Religion, this should not be used as a loop hole to allow discrimination for LGBTQ people. I fully oppose any religious exemption bills that would continue the burden of inequality.
- Removing the Marshall Newman Marriage Amendment from the Virginia Constitution: As the Marshall Neman Marriage Amendment was ruled unconstitutional in 2014 and



marriage equality has been the law of the land since 2015, I fully support the removal of Marshall Newman Marriage Amendment from the Virginia Constitution.

Provide any additional information regarding your involvement in or support for the LGBTQ community: As an openly gay man in a committed interracial relationship, I understand the needs and issues in the LGBTQ community first-hand -- in a way many other politicians cannot. I hope to use my experiences to serve ALL Virginians in the General Assembly.