

# Annapolis Pride 2021 City of Annapolis Primary Election Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate: **ELLY TIERNEY, WARD 1 (D)**

*(See candidate responses in bold, blue, italic font)*

1. Please let us know if you have ever volunteered with or supported any LGBTQ+ organizations, such as Annapolis Pride, PFLAG, or the Human Rights Campaign. Feel free to include events in which you participated. Please include all groups you feel are pertinent including LGBTQ+ Equity actions or advocacy that you have taken in other non-LGBTQ+ organizations or Boards. If no previous volunteer or advocacy experience with or for LGBTQ+ Community, please explain why not and how you now understand the importance of such advocacy.

*Not sure if this answers specifically, but my involvement in LGBTQ fairness and rights was during the AIDS epidemic. I was working at Turner Construction, primarily white male environment, and we were gathered into the conference room to hear leadership say that someone had tested HIV positive and 'to not share utensils'. My colleague Lee, was gay and never came out due to this environment. He was mortified. Also, the person testing positive was as well. I asked Lee how I could help. At that point there was not any known advocacy groups that I was aware of so all I could do was be his friend and confidante. I never will forget that sadness and it instilled in me a passion to help our fellow human beings that were punished for being who they struggled to be. My twin brother has also suffered emotionally in this world for years. He never found his soulmate because of this turmoil. It is not universally accepted. It perhaps may never well be. So, we must do whatever we can to support, celebrate and love our LGBTQ+ Community. I have been involved with Annapolis Pride in a celebratory way. I had the best time at the last parade as I couldn't wait and dolled myself up and pretended that I was the parade marshal. Your questionnaire helps me understand that I am not doing enough and I should join more groups. On another personal note, my present colleague with the City in Finance is my dear gay friend who is married and has a child. I believe she is going to join your board! So on to next questions! Oh, and I just joined! [Human Rights Campaign]*

2. [The Trevor Project National Survey on LGBTQ+ Youth Mental Health 2021](#) surveyed nearly 35,000 LGBTQ youth ages 13-24 across the United States. Among the key findings of the survey:
  - **42% of LGBTQ youth** seriously considered attempting suicide in the past year, including **more than half of transgender and nonbinary youth**.
  - **12% of white youth** attempted suicide compared to **31% of Native/Indigenous youth**, **21% of Black youth**, **21% of multiracial youth**, **18% of Latinx youth**, and **12% of Asian/Pacific Islander youth**.

Please discuss your feelings about the data above and how you would help support LGBTQ+ youth and specifically Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC), and transgender nonbinary youth. Have you advocated for or endorsed legislation and actions on the state or local level to keep LGBTQ+ youth safe? Explain if you have not and what you intend to do in the future to improve the mental health of LGBTQ+ youth in Annapolis.

*This is all new data for me and obviously alarming but yet understandable. I look back at Lee, being white in a predominantly macho environment and I'm surprised he didn't try to take his life. I look at my nephew Mac, who works for a federal government agency and I see his hesitation in coming out. Locally we can write resolutions etc. but I think it is more effective, being in the State Capital, that we work with State Senator Sarah Elfreth on non-discrimination legislation. We also need to involve our County Councilwoman Lisa Rodvien on the County's continuing efforts (See 3. Below). (Schools are under the County, not City). I will work on a resolution for now with their help to bring awareness to this. The information you provide above will be used in the whereas Clause, and I will frame it with the County unless you have some additional language you'd like me to include.*

*Hope that answers? This is alarming. And the pandemic I'm sure was a trigger.*

3. On June 16, 2021 the Anne Arundel County Public School Board passed the [Safe and Inclusive Environments for LGBTQ+ Students](#), a comprehensive policy that prohibits discrimination and harassment based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. The policy states support for the right of any student to be addressed by a name and pronoun that correspond to the student's gender identity. Additionally, the policy supports the right of any student to use school facilities that correspond with gender identity in which the student identifies.

Please discuss the importance of the adoption of policies in schools that respect student gender identification, including consideration of reasonable and respectful accommodation in regard to facilities. Please provide your feelings regarding "Bathroom Bills" that have been proposed around the country.

*This bill was huge, especially in a County with some strong conservative and ugly positions. The objective here is the dignity of the student. DIGNITY. Who are we to question or dictate what gender one identifies with? So yes, I am in support and anything logistically we need to do to make the student feel comfortable and avoid any difficulty in access. Not sure if signage is adequate or needed. Something to explore.*

4. How have you advocated for the LGBTQ+ community and supported inclusion for the LGBTQ+ community in the past (i.e. have you spoken out publicly for policies at your

place of business, testified before government bodies, adopted written policies for your employees, marched for equal rights, etc.)? Please be specific.

***See above as far as marching. I have much more to do for testifying etc. More reason to have joined HRC.***

5. It has been well documented that LGBTQ+ people face health disparities linked to societal stigma, discrimination, and lack of access to quality health care. How have you advocated to reduce LGBTQ+ health disparities? Explain if you have not and what you intend to do in the future to improve the health of LGBTQ+ people in Annapolis.

***Again, this is alarming to me in this present day. I fear that we need to fight more than ever with the constant threat to universal health care by our friends on the other political side. I have not advocated in the past and I will do anything necessary to improve the health of the LGBTQ+ community. Starting today with reading more about this. Example: <https://www.ama-assn.org/member-groups-sections/advisory-committee-lgbtq-issues>***

6. What is your position on police reform and do you support police training and education on issues of concern to the LGBTQ+ community?

***I am co-sponsor on police reform legislation that has not been introduced yet may not be until next term. We are learning that the APD police force is governed by the State of MD as far as compliance, so we can't veer too much off of that. We have received the State's legislation and it shies away from addressing behavior and leans more towards consequences. It appears they realize that you can't 'regulate' human behavior so best to have a no tolerance policy to deter. How that answers you question...I'm not sure. Is their discrimination in the treatment of APD or vice versa? I will research more on this.***

***Thank you for the opportunity to answer these questions. This is an example of being ignorant of the many advocacy groups I could become involved with and I sincerely thank you for that.***

***I love you and wish you so much success in advocating for human tolerance, dignity and love for others. They are our brothers, sisters, friends and those still suffering alone.***

***Alderwoman Elly Tierney***



Annapolis Pride invited all candidates in the upcoming City of Annapolis elections to participate in our first candidate questionnaire to educate voters impartially and on a nonpartisan basis. We encouraged all candidates to participate regardless of party affiliation. Candidate questionnaire responses are distributed for purely informational purposes.

Annapolis Pride is a volunteer, grassroots non profit organization that advocates for the LGBTQ+ community all year long and hosts the annual Annapolis Pride Parade and Festival held in June. Learn more at [AnnapolisPride.org](https://AnnapolisPride.org). Contact Annapolis Pride at [info@annapolispride.org](mailto:info@annapolispride.org) or by mail, PO Box 4822, Annapolis, MD 21403.

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