

Annapolis Pride 2021 City of Annapolis Primary Election Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate: **ROB SAVIDGE, WARD 7 (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.

Yes, I volunteered in the past with Chesapeake Pride and helped to organize and staff their annual pride festival.

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.

Those suicide rates are astounding, and point to the need to have support services for both the LGBTQ youth as well as for parents/families of those youth. This speaks to the need to have a more proactive, single payer health care system. I have voted to create an Office of Community Services for the City and would support looking at how they can help LGBTQ youth.

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.

I haven't developed a position on "bathroom bills" and gender identification, and would like to understand it more, but do value building welcoming atmospheres in our schools, as it's important that our youth feel safe, and that they can express themselves in positive ways.

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.

Yes. The very first ordinance I ever testified on in Annapolis was in support of an ordinance that would provide health benefits to the same-sex partners of City employees. This was back in the mid 2000's. I've also marched at many rallies in support of equal rights in Washington DC.

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.

I supported the City Council's effort, back in the mid 2000's, to extend health benefits to same sex partners of City employees. The City Council the ability to alter the health care provided to City employees, and I am open to making any changes that would help the LGBTQ+ community. Other than that, the City Council doesn't have much of a role over health care. I did introduce, and secured passage, of a Resolution in support of Medicare for all on a national level, which also supported the creation of a Maryland Commission exploring the issue for Maryland.

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

Yes, I do. I have introduced legislation called the PEACE ordinance (Police Enhancement And Community Engagement), which is the largest and most comprehensive police reform legislation introduced in the City. It incorporates recommendations from the Anne Arundel task force on gun violence, institutes new data gathering and reporting

requirements, helps us shift even more towards a model of community policing, improves transparency of police regulatory changes, places strong prohibitions on the use of chokeholds, improves the consent search requirements, strengthens our use of force policy, prevents the police from attacking peaceful protesters, takes steps to de-militarize the police, and establishes new training requirements to improve officer's cultural awareness, including the needs of the LGBTQ+ community.



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. Contact Annapolis Pride at info@annapolispride.org or by mail, PO Box 4822, Annapolis, MD 21403.
