



ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE 2022

Geraldine F. Thompson

**Running for
Florida Senate
District 11**

Candidate Information

Website: <https://www.electgeraldine.com>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/electgeraldine>
Twitter: @electgeraldine
Instagram:

1. What motivated you to run for this position?

I like to assist individuals with issues related to state government and I am particularly interested in working with underserved communities.

2. What does being an ally or advocate for the LGBTQ+ community mean to you?

It means empowering people to be open about who they are and to live their best life.

3. Please summarize your history of community involvement. This may include city boards, civic associations, non-profits, etc.

I am a member of the League of Women Voters, the NAACP, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH) and I am the Founder of the Association to Preserve African American Society, History and Tradition, Inc. (PAST) which operates the Wells' Built Museum of African American History and Culture..

Q40: Why do you believe that you are the best choice for Black and Brown voters? If so, why? As events evolve in the state of Florida and the Nation, it is important to have a seasoned, steadfast individual in a decision and policy-making position who understands the challenges faced by Black and Brown voters. That is my background which makes me the best choice for Black and Brown voters.

4. Please summarize any work you have performed in the past five years to further LGBTQ+ rights. This may include paid positions, volunteer work, and donations.

I supported the Zebra Coalition and I have worked with 26 Health. 26 Health is a clinic that focuses on the LGBTQ+ community.

Questions

5. **The rise in anti-LGBTQ+ legislation barreling down from Tallahassee has caused a sharp increase in discrimination and violence against the LGBTQ+ community in Orange County. How would you go about reducing discrimination in your district or local community? How would you measure your progress?**

I strongly opposed HB 1557 during session and I participated in the Pride Parade. I spoke out against the governors retaliation against Disney after Disney's leadership spoke on the passage of HB 1557.

6. **Elected officials and office staff are still woefully under-educated on the transgender community. This means that the services their offices provide are often ignorant of the needs of the transgender community. What actions would you take to ensure that the services your office will provide will be educated on and cognizant of the needs of the transgender community?**

I and my staff will tour organizations the serve the LGBTQ+ community so that we will remain informed and can share that information with our constituents.

7. **The Florida Republican Party is leading the country in stripping away LGBTQ+ rights, starting with our children. Students are having their lives and livelihoods placed at risk by laws such as the Transgender Sports Ban, the so-called Parental Bill of Rights, and now Don't Say Gay. These shamelessly discriminatory bills are forcing LGBTQ+ families to reconsider their future in Florida. What would you tell the parents of LGBTQ+ children in your district who feel they need to leave Florida in order to protect their children?**

I would tell these parents that it's important to have individuals in the legislative process who will continue to fight against discrimination of all kinds and I am committed to doing that, with regard to creating a climate in Florida, where parents feel that their children can be safe.

8. **The Trevor Project's 2022 National Survey on LGBTQ Youth Mental Health found that 45% of LGBTQ+ students seriously considered attempting suicide and 1-in-5 LGBTQ+ attempt it. How would you lead on this issue and work to decrease these statistics over the course of your term in office?**

I would highlight the danger that repressive laws pose for LGBTQ individuals in order to make the community aware of the plight of LGTBQ youth.

- 9. The same survey by The Trevor Project found that nearly all transgender and non-binary students have had to worry about their access to gender-affirming healthcare, bathrooms, and sports teams being taken away from them. How would you work to take this fear off their shoulders so that they can go back to just being kids?**

I would continue to oppose legislation such as banning the participation of transgender students in athletic programs and to take this burden off of their shoulders, legislation such as HB 1557 and HB 7.

- 10. Far-right groups are pushing to ban books on any topic they find disagreeable, such as books on Black history and experiences, immigration, the LGBTQ+ community, climate change, etc. Do you support these book bans? If not, what is your plan to counter them and ensure students have access to a full array of age-appropriate knowledge and experiences?**

I do not support bans on books. I will work with the department of education to include information on differing lifestyles and family composition within the curriculum.

- 11. During a town hall in your district, a constituent describes being gay or transgender as a "lifestyle choice." What is incorrect about their description? How would you constructively respond in this situation?**

Studies have shown that it's not a choice, it's something that is innate from birth and early childhood. I would also emphasize the fact that no one would choose to be subjected to discrimination, isolation and violence, which LGBTQ youth experience because of who they are and it is not subject to change.

- 12. During a board meeting, the board chair purposely refers to a transgender woman as "he" and "him" as the woman attempts to give her public comment. The woman corrects the board chair each time, insisting that her pronouns are "she" and "her." The board chair continues to misgender the woman until she eventually leaves the chamber in tears. How would you respond in this situation?**

I would inform the board that people should be respected with regard to their choice of gender pronouns.

13. A parent approaches you at an event, insisting that her son's teachers have "groomed" him into liking boys. Her son is at her side when she says this. How do respond to the parent's statement such that the young boy leaves feeling better about himself?

I would ask for specific behaviors on behalf of the teacher that has led the parent to this conclusion. What has the teacher done that the parent feels is causing her son to like other boys? I would encourage the child to discuss his feelings with his parents or a responsible adult, if certain behaviors on behalf of the teacher has encouraged him to be attracted to boys.

14. Orange County continues to embrace urban sprawl, despite a plethora of data that links urban sprawl to severe strains on our housing, employment, healthcare, and public transit systems (to name a few). What are your thoughts on Orange County's growth? What could Orange County in terms of development that would better serve the communities in your district?

I would encourage development that builds upwards rather than outward and thereby reduce urban sprawl.

15. Do you support the idea of constructing more multi-family homes in neighborhoods traditionally zoned for single-family homes? What impact would this have on your district?

I thin affordability is a greater issue than availability. In my district, there are now multiple apartment units and condos, however, the cost are prohibitors for many low income workers.

16. Homeowner Associations often prevent homeowners from transitioning their lawns away from non-functional grasses such as turf and towards sustainable options such as native Florida plants and edible landscapes. HOAs insist that moving away from the traditional pristine green lawn would lower housing prices. What is your opinion on this issue?

The traditional manicured lawn does come at a price and I would recommend that Xeriscaping be adapted for new construction.

17. What are the top environmental concerns you are seeing in your District and what are the solutions you plan to bring forward if you were elected?

Pollution of water bodies, which may at times have nutrients that wash into lakes etc. I would address this issue with regard to the use of fertilizers and other chemicals that contribute to fish kills, blue green algae etc.

18. Contributions are typically linked to poor environmental policies being passed. Are you pledging to stay away from any particular contributions?

I will not accept contributions from companies that operate private prisons.

19. Understanding our economic position, how do you plan to localize and strengthen our food system?

I would encourage community gardens, where young people can learn how to plant and harvest fresh produce. I would encourage farmers markets in underserved communities. I would continue promoting legislation similar to a bill I passed that allows the use of EBT cards at farmers market to promote better food choice for low income individuals.