



ENDORSEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE 2022

Travaris McCurdy

**Running for
Florida House of Representatives
District 41**

Candidate Information

Website: www.travarisforflorida.com
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1. What motivated you to run for this position?

I am seeking re-election to continue fighting the residents of HD41 and throughout the state of Florida. In addition I have and will continue to stand up against those voices who seek to further disadvantage marginalized communities with bad policy proposals.

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

Not mincing words and not looking to divide for my own political ambitions. Also, understanding that every Floridian, no matter our background, where we come from, or who we love deserves the freedom to know that with hard work, we can provide a good life for our family.

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

West Lake Board member

OCPS-ACE school board member

AMI Kids board member

Orange County NAACP member

Elected Representative

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 am proud of my record over the course of my first term, standing up, speaking out, and supporting furthering and protecting existing rights of our LGBTQ+ community including attending/speaking at press conferences, rallying with trans youth at the capitol and speaking to LGBTQ+ organizations directly.

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 try to remind people that although your community or demographic isn't under attack today there is always the possibility of that changing tomorrow. We have to respect one another and the way to measure whether that message resonates is the inverse from which allows us to recognize the sharp increase described to then review cases of reported discrimination and violence and hope to see a sharp decrease.

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?**

Continue to invite members of the community to share their lived experiences and remain diligent to providing an inclusive office environment for all residents.

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?**

VOTE because our livelihoods depend on it now more than ever. And as a black man in this country more specifically in Ron Desantis's Florida I know what its like to feel at risk by dangerous proposed legislation.

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?**

Work to expand mental health access in schools and in communities through partnerships with community advocates and mental health professionals.

- 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?**

As I have I will continue to fight to ensure that very member of our community and every resident of this state has fair, equitable access to basic fundamental rights

- 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 disagree with these bans. Its simple; continue opposing bad bills, supporting good bills.

- 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?**

I would have to make that decision in that moment.

- 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 have to make that decision in that moment.

- 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?**

"At a time when so much hate is being spewed I'm happy our teachers aren't being accused of grooming our students to dislike anyone. Its important that we respect and try to understand one another, both things we share in common as well as things that make us different. If you would like to talk more one on one I would graciously accept"

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?

We elect local leaders to make these decisions. My job as a state representative is to protect home rule so that those elected at the local level can do their jobs effective and in accordance to what the residents wish to see.

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?

Yes- it would assist with alleviating some of the burdens we see due to current lack of affordable housing available to my constituents

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?

This is not a state issue, but is an example of why I support home rule in Tallahassee.

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?

Water quality and quantity are huge issues as well as the quality of air. Work with environmental groups and experts to find long term solutions to preserve our natural resources which aides in our successful tourism industry and economic growth overall.

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

I pledge to represent the interests of the constituents I serve. It takes resources to communicate with the over 100k residents in HD41. I have received contributions in the past from organizations that I have been on opposing sides of particular issues.

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

Increasing access to healthy foods. Advocating for state funding in high school agricultural and nutritional programs in addition to sponsoring appropriation requests for local non-profit organizations like I have for HEBNI Nutrition's mobile food truck to educate high risk, culturally diverse communities about nutrition strategies.