



GLBT Alliance of Santa Cruz County Candidate Questionnaire

for endorsement in the November 2016 general election

Dear Candidate,

The GLBT Alliance is Santa Cruz County's queer political organization focusing specifically on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) political issues. We are a membership-driven, local political organization, and have been working on behalf of Santa Cruz LGBTQ community since 2001 to keep us aware of political issues and campaigns impacting LGBTQ and allied civil rights, and to help achieve and enhance those rights through advocacy and action.

As we begin our endorsement process for the 2016 election cycle, we congratulate you on declaring your candidacy and invite you to complete and submit a candidate questionnaire. Participating in our endorsement process allows our membership to get to know you, what you stand for and who you are as a candidate. It also allows us to learn about your understanding of and experiences with LGBTQ issues important to our community.

Please return questionnaires no later than Monday, September 5th, by 8 pm, to:

The GLBT Alliance of Santa Cruz County
glbtalliance@yahoo.com

Candidate and Campaign Information

Candidate Name: **Chris Krohn**

Campaign Address: **123 Green Street Santa Cruz 95060**

Phone: **831-454-6170**

Campaign Website: **ChrisKrohnForCityCouncil.org, Krohn4Council.com**

Email: ckrohn@cruzio.com

Campaign Manager Name/Email/Phone: **Evan Grupsmith, egrupsmith@gmail.com and Candace Brown, Treasurer clbrown23@gmail.com**

Office you seek to be elected to: **Santa Cruz City Council**

District Number: **NA**

Please choose the option best describing your candidacy: **Open Seat**

Are you a member of the GLBT Alliance? **No**. If so, when did you first join?

Do you identify as a member of the LGBTQ community? **No**. If not, do you identify as an ally? **Yes**.

Questionnaire (please answer questions directly and keep responses succinct and brief)

1. Please describe your qualifications for the position you seek (include your key issues, priorities if elected, and any key endorsements you'd like to share), plus anything else that you'd like our members to know about you and your candidacy.

I've been involved in local political issues since 1983 when I was an undergraduate at UC Santa Cruz. Poorly planned and executed US policies undermined the rebels in El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua. Those same policies assisted in propping up the country of South Africa and its abhorrent apartheid government. During this period too I rallied alongside others in confronting the UCSC chancellor when he denied tenure to UCSC Lecturer and gay rights activist, Nancy Shaw (Stoller). I also worked on several city council campaigns in those years as well as writing news analysis articles for City on a Hill Press.

I was elected to the Santa Cruz City council in 1998 and was mayor in 2002. During those years we passed a living wage for city workers, achieved 25% [HUD] affordable housing on two projects—1010 Pacific Ave. and 1280 Shaffer Road (200 units) and we never approved a project (that I am aware) that allowed a developer to buy their way out of building affordable units through in-lieu fees.

Since leaving the city council I have worked on water policy issues through DesalAlternatives and the Community Water Coalition; I was on the steering committee of both Leonie Sherman and Bruce Van Allen's city council campaigns in 2014; and I covered the last three Democratic and Republican conventions as a working journalist (see: BerkeleyDailyPlanet.com, Santa Cruz Sentinel, and Santa Cruz Good Times for published work).

I am running for city council to 1) implement changes in housing policy in order to provide not more market rate housing, which is highly profitable for housing developers, but to address the need for truly affordable units, housing that would address those making between 40-80% of the current Santa Cruz median income of around \$83,000 per year. 2) I want to see neighborhoods have a greater voice in planning decisions, and not just maligned as NIMBY's because they show concern for their neighborhoods. Neighbors should be included in the planning process as having legitimate concerns. 3) I'm running to bring more openness to the city council policy process, particularly the council chambers. I want to see more of the public's business done in public and not in closed session meetings. 4) I am also running to further environmental protection for our beaches, the San Lorenzo River and to put into effect the climate change mitigations detailed in the city's "Climate Action Plan."

Endorsers of my campaign for city council, former elected officials many of whom were endorsed

by the GLBTQ community during their elective office campaigns:

- **Katherine Beiers**, *Former Mayor and Councilmember*
- **Sally DiGirolamo**, *former Mayor*
- **Tim Fitzmaurice**, *Former Mayor and Councilmember*
- **Gary Patton**, *former Santa Cruz County Supervisor*
- **Ed Porter**, *Former Councilmember*
- **Micah Posner**, *Councilmember*
- **Celia Scott**, *Former Mayor and Councilmember*
- **Bruce Van Allen**, *former Mayor*
- **Jane Weed-Pomerantz**, *Former Mayor and Councilmember*
- **Tim Willis**, *Former School Board President*
- **Valerie Coral**, *co-founder of WAMM*

2. Why are you seeking the endorsement of Santa Cruz County's grassroots LGBTQ political organization, the GLBT Alliance?

My experience is that the GLBT Alliance is an effective organization, one that serves the community in putting forward issues that result in bringing positive change in city policies and procedures. As a long-time listener to the longest running radio show, "Closet-Free Radio," I have become acquainted with many of the cutting edge policy issues and personal stories of the LGBTQ community, and also its history, at least since Stonewall.

3. Please tell us about any past or current experiences or involvement you've had addressing LGBTQ issues, or working to support the LGBTQ community.

- a) For the past twelve years I've worked with students at UC Santa Cruz and have always sought to engage with students around LGBTQI issues as well as create a safe space in which they might participate in these discussions.**
- b) I am committed to defending the rights of gay people. I support their struggle in calling for the protection of the rights of LGBTQ community members as well as the further extension and freedom to exercise all of our human rights. I was proud to be an American the day Hillary Clinton declared at a United Nations session in 2011: *Gay rights are human rights...Being gay is not a Western invention, it is a human reality.*"**
- c) I participated in "Take Back the Night" (1983), worked to drive Miss California pageant out of Santa Cruz (1985), and actively protested UC's divestment of the racist government in South Africa.**
- d) I also cherish celebrating gay culture on Pride Day each year.**

4. What political or civil rights issues were you aware of, prior to reading the attached informational materials, regarding LGBTQ equality?

- a) Legal discrimination of GLBT community in denying employment to gay people;**
- b) Gay rights are human rights;**
- c) Gender restroom issue;**
- d) The Matthew Shephard torture and murder in 1998**
- e) Suicide of Tyler Clementi in 2012;**
- f) The high rate of homeless youth across America including Santa Cruz;**
- g) Stonewall Uprising in 1969;**
- h) legalized "conversion therapy;"**
- i) Gavin Newsom as SF mayor supporting/allowing gay marriage to go forward;**

- j) United States vs. Edith Windsor June 26, 2013, DOMA ruled unconstitutional;**
k) Supreme Court decisions June 26, 2015, gay marriage is a constitutional right.

5. What is your philosophy about working with minority communities of which you are not a member, and how will this manifest in your future work with the LGBTQ community?

My philosophy begins with gay rights being human rights. I practice the golden rule of treating everyone as I would like them to treat me...and then fighting like hell to insure the rights of minorities when discrimination, outright ignorance, or malicious intent is visited upon certain communities, and also using judicial and governmental protections to insure that individual and collective freedoms are realized.

6. Please describe any programs you know of that impact the LGBTQ community and that are governed by or funded through the elected office you are running for, and include any suggestions you may have for improvements.

The city of Santa Cruz assists in funding the Diversity Center which provides counselling, legal services, and mental health and anti-violence programs to the LGBTQ community. The Community Foundation provides grants to LGBTQ groups as well. It is a startling statistic too that 1/3 of gay youth have attempted suicide, so suicide prevention should be a priority in implementing programs intended to support the gay community.

The city of Santa Cruz has sought to create safe spaces for LGBTQ youth at the Loudon Nelson Community Center and the Teen Center among other places in the city.

I would be an ally for the following groups and organizations that are directly, or indirectly affected by funding and policy decisions by the SC city council:

- **The Diversity Center**
- **Equality Action Project**
- **Equinox**
- **Gay-Straight Alliance**
- **GLBT Alliance**
- **STRANGE**
- **Triangle Speakers**

7. If elected, how would you use your position to help further issues of importance to the LGBTQ community?

- a) I would make myself available as an ally to the groups listed above;**
b) I intend to meet regularly with representatives of the LGBTQ community and work with them on putting forward issues and initiatives that protect and defend and further the rights of LGBTQ individuals and groups.
c) I will march in the Pride Day Festival;
d) Offer to mediate issues between the city and businesses and/or groups within the city;
e) Speak out on the rights of the LGBTQI community.

8. If you receive the GLBT Alliance's endorsement, will you display it in your campaign literature?
Yes, proudly and participate in other LGBTQ events too.

Attachment 1: Informational Handout on Local, State and National LGBTQ Issues

National LGBTQ Political Landscape

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) recently released a report citing a surge of more than 175 anti-LGBT bills have been introduced across 32 states in 2016, and specifically names 2016 as the most dangerous year on record for transgender Americans.

Current anti-LGBT efforts include attempts to turn back the clock on marriage equality, as well as various “religious exemption” bills that would allow the use of tax-payer dollars to discriminate against same-sex couples, and laws that protect LGBT “conversion therapy,” practices.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has catalogued anti-LGBTQ legislation currently pending in states across the nation and in the federal government, by category, locality and active status. Please read through their list, here: <https://www.aclu.org/lgbt-nondiscrimination-and-anti-lgbt-bills-across-country>.

In particular, there are 44 proposed new laws across 16 states targeting transgender people. These laws would prevent transgender folks from changing the gender marker on their birth certificates, impose humiliating burdens on transgender people seeking to get married, make it harder to access gender-affirming health care, and would deny access to bathrooms that align with one’s gender identity. 23 of these bills specifically target children and students.

HRC Report on Anti-Transgender Legislation Nation-Wide:

<http://hrc-assets.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/files/assets/resources/HRC-Anti-Trans-Issue-Brief-FINAL-REV2.pdf>

The U.S. House of Representatives has introduced the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) to prohibit discrimination in hiring and employment on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity by employers with at least 15 employees. This legislation has been introduced in every Congress since 1994 except the 109th. Protections based on gender identity were first added to ENDA in 2007. At that time, some believed that ENDA did not have enough support with transgender inclusion to pass Congress, and gender identity was dropped from the bill. It passed the House and then died in the Senate. In 2009, 2011 and 2013, a transgender-inclusive version of ENDA was reintroduced and in 2013, the Senate passed it with bipartisan support. However, as a result of a political maneuvering by the republican majority in 2014, a version of ENDA with a narrow religious exemption amendment was added to the 2015 defense authorization bill and was then rejected by the House Rules Committee. The legislation remains in flux to this day. Read more on ENDA, here: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/815/text>.

There are many more nuanced issues facing the LGBTQ community, nationally. We encourage you to learn more about issues facing LGBTQ youth, seniors, the Latino/a LGBTQ community, immigrants and same-sex immigrant couples, transgender healthcare, transgender issues in the criminal justice system, “bathroom safety bills” and religious exemption efforts nation-wide. Please review these and more:

- Federal Judge Strikes Down Mississippi’s Same-Sex Adoption Ban, <https://www.frontiersmedia.com/frontiers-blog/2016/04/01/federal-judge-strikes-mississippi-sex-adoption-ban/>
- Why So Many States Are Fighting Over LGBT Rights in 2016, <http://time.com/4277247/north-carolina-georgia-lgbt-rights-religious-liberty-bills/>
- DHS urged to take action for LGBT people in immigration detention, <https://www.washingtonblade.com/2016/03/28/dhs-urged-to-take-action-for-lgbt-people-in-immigration-detention/>
- Honda protests LGBT detainees’ treatment: <http://ebar.com/news/article.php?sec=news&article=71414>.
- Escaping the cartel, a trans woman seeks asylum at the border, <http://sdgln.com/news/2016/04/01/escaping-cartel-trans-woman-seeks-asylum-border>.
- Activists Try to Calm Fears Over Transgender Bathroom Access, <http://abcnews.go.com/US/wireStory/activists-calm-fears-transgender-bathroom-access-38119244>.

California State LGBTQ Political Issues

Here in California, we have seen the election of many LGBTQ and allied state representatives who have helped pass progressive legislation to help protect LGBTQ people from workplace, housing and medical discriminations, to ensure same sex married couples can access partner benefits, to prohibit LGBTQ school bullying and include LGBTQ history in school curriculum, and to make sure transgender students can safely access bathrooms in schools that align with their gender identity. While great progress has been made toward equality, there is still much more to be done.

Equality California (EQCA) is our state's largest LGBTQ organization working to advance the health and well-being of LGBT Californians through direct healthcare service advocacy and education in Sacramento and beyond. Through electoral, advocacy, education and mobilization programs, EQCA forwards a robust state legislative platform in tandem with progressive LGBTQ and allied state law makers to advance equality and social justice for LGBTQ people state-wide. Learn more about EQCA's current legislative platform here: <http://www.eqca.org/category/legislation/2015/>, and the history of recent LGBTQ legislation in California, here: <http://www.eqca.org/legislation/past-legislation/>.

Locally and throughout the state, LGBTQ youth still face bullying in schools. Our seniors still face isolation and discrimination as they seek care for aging. While denying transgender people access to healthcare, training and advocacy is desperately needed to help curb illegal denial of coverage by insurance companies, and better quality healthcare by providers. HIV/AIDS funding is on the decline even though we've seen an uptick in infection rates. We encourage you to learn more about the issues facing LGBTQ people throughout California. Please review these issues covering just some of the challenges LGBTQ people face in our state:

- Anti-gay state laws aid push for CA travel ban bill, <http://ebar.com/news/article.php?sec=news&article=71412>
- A unique Hollywood housing complex will mix LGBT youth and seniors, <http://www.scp.org/news/2016/03/30/59004/planned-hollywood-center-to-house-lgbt-youth-senior/>.
- Exploring Housing Alternatives to Aid Sexually Exploited Youth, <https://chronicleofsocialchange.org/featured/exploring-housing-alternatives-to-aid-sexually-exploited-youth/16934>.
- Why Aging and Caregiving Are Harder for LGBT Adults, <http://www.nextavenue.org/why-aging-and-caregiving-are-harder-for-lgbt-adults/>
- LGBT curriculum riles some East Bay middle school parents, http://www.mercurynews.com/news/ci_29710289/lgbt-curriculum-riles-some-east-bay-middle-school.
- Deaf lesbian couple who were attacked with a bat: 'We're scared to walk the streets', <http://sdgln.com/news/2016/03/26/deaf-lesbian-couple-who-were-attacked-bat-were-sacred-walk-streets>.
- New Racist and Homophobic Texts Between Officers Part of Deeper 'Systemic' Culture at SFPD, <http://www.towleroad.com/2016/04/homophobic-texts/>

Local LGBTQ Community Issues

HRC manages a "Municipality Equality Index", or MEI score-card, rating cities across the nation for the ways they support the LGBTQ people who live and work there, even where states and the federal government have failed to do so. Please review the MEI, here: <http://www.hrc.org/resources/mei-2015-see-your-city-score>.

None of the cities within the County of Santa Cruz have been entered into the MEI to be rated. Please consider doing so: <http://www.hrc.org/resources/submit-a-municipality-to-be-rated-2015>.

Locally, in addition to the GLBT Alliance as Santa Cruz County's queer political organization, there are many groups providing a wide array of supports and services to the various demographics within the LGBTQ community. Some of these groups include:

- The Diversity Center (includes Triangle Speakers, the 60+ Seniors Program, STRANGE Youth Program, the Trans Program, Conexiones Latino/a LGBT Program): <https://www.diversitycenter.org>
- The Queer Youth Task Force of Santa Cruz County: <http://www.qytf.org>
- PFLAG of Santa Cruz County: <http://www.pflag SCC.org/>
- Out in Our Faith: <https://tbeaptos.org/?q=content/out-our-faith>
- Cantu Queer Center (UCSC): <http://queer.ucsc.edu/>
- Santa Cruz AIDS Project: <http://www.encompasscs.org/community-support-services/santa-cruz-aids-project-scap>
- Santa Cruz Pride: <http://santacruzpride.org/>
- SOMOS LGBT: <https://www.facebook.com/SOMOS-LGBT-124037564344525/>
- The Community Foundation Diversity Partnership: <http://www.cfsc.org/Nonprofits/Grants/DiversityPartnership.aspx>
- Closet Free Radio (KZSC): <https://www.kzsc.org/blog/tag/closet-free-radio/>
- Out In Santa Cruz (KSCO): <http://outinsantacruz.com>
- Lez Cruz: <http://lezcruz.org>
- SantaCruzGayMen.org: <https://www.santacruzgaymen.org>
- Radical Fairies: <http://www.santacruzradicalfaeries.com/>
- Planned Parenthood Transgender Health Program: <https://www.plannedparenthood.org/planned-parenthood-mar-monte/patient-resources/transgender-services>

The needs of LGBTQ Youth in our area schools are great. While national and state laws aim to protect LGBTQ students, local schools and school districts often lack the funds necessary for training, enforcement and implementation of policies to educate students on equality, and protect students from bullying. While many schools in our areas have Gay-Straight Alliance and Queer-Straight Alliance clubs, not all do, and not all are able to because of complicated local political issues. LGBTQ Youth also face higher rates of homelessness locally and nationally, due to the lack of family support many youth face when they come out of the closet. Please learn more about programs aiming to make youth and student experiences better, here: <http://qytf.org/safe-schools-project/safe-schools-project-report/>.

LGBTQ Seniors often go back into the closet as they pass retirement age, as a result of facing greater risk of isolation and discrimination as they seek specialized aging care in and out of their homes. The Diversity Center's 60+ Seniors Program offers LGBTQ Seniors in Santa Cruz County opportunities to enhance their quality of life through social and recreation activities. Learn more: <http://www.diversitycenter.org/senior>.

HIV/AIDS education and services are an important public health intervention for at-risk communities, which has always centered on the gay male community since the AIDS epidemic first arose in the 1980s. In more recent years, the disease has had an unfortunate resurgence among men who have unprotected sex with other men, and who largely do so without identifying as gay and without seeking medical care or advice accordingly.

The City and County of Santa Cruz each have a long history of responding to the HIV/AIDS epidemic by supporting the Santa Cruz AIDS Project, the work of the County Health Department and syringe exchange programs as proven, successful intervention programs. Continued support for successful health education and intervention programs that curb the disease from spreading and that help eradicate HIV is critical, and local government's role cannot be overlooked—especially among those in the LGBTQ community who have been at ground zero of the epidemic since its beginning.

Please read more:

<http://www.santacruzhealth.org/HSAHome/HSADivisions/PublicHealth/HIVAIDSServices.aspx>,
<http://www.encompasscs.org/community-support-services/santa-cruz-aids-project-scap>.