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Page 1: Questionnaire

### Q1 Candidate Information

Candidate Name: **Ryan Coonerty**

Email:

Phone:

Website: **www.ryancoonerty.org**

Do you identify as LGBTIQ? **No**

Are you a GLBT Alliance member? **I think so**

Office you seek to be elected to: **County Supervisor-Third District**

**Q2** Please choose the option best describing your candidacy: **Incumbent**

**Q3** Please describe your qualifications for the elected position you seek. Include your main issues, priorities if elected, key endorsements, plus anything else that you'd like our members to know about you and your candidacy.

I have served on the Board of Supervisors for three years, working to support working families, our local economy, to protect the environment and improve public safety. Prior to serving on the Board, I served for 8 years on the Santa Cruz City Council, serving 2 years as mayor (2008 & 2011). I'm raising two young children with my wife and I am absolutely committed to Santa Cruz County. On the Board, I led the effort to support families by implementing a successful program for low-income mothers and babies. I've pushed for more affordable housing and improved access to health care and good jobs. I'm committed to reducing poverty, increasing opportunity and building a stronger community. I'm working to meet our community's biggest challenges such as housing, homelessness, mental health, crime and substance abuse. I'm fighting for our values. Our nation's principles are under attack by the federal government and I'm advocating for immigrant families, LGBTIQ and women's rights. If re-elected, I will work to make the Nurse-Family Partnership Program a standard benefit for members of the Alliance (the Medi-Cal HMO for our area) so that new families have better outcomes, I will actively support affordable housing projects in the County, and I will keep fighting for our values of equality and justice. Key Endorsements: I'm proud to be endorsed by Assemblymember Stone, Senator Monning, Sheriff Hart, Supervisors Friend, Leopold, and McPherson, Santa Cruz Mayor Terrazas, Vice Mayor Watkins, Councilmembers Mathews, Chase and Noroyan, as well as former Mayors Beiers, Bryant, Lane, Reilly and Rotkin. My full endorsement list can be found here:  
<https://www.ryancoonerty.org/endorsements>

**Q4** Why are you seeking the endorsement of Santa Cruz County's grassroots LGBTIQ political organization, the GLBT Alliance?

I am seeking an endorsement from the GLBT Alliance because I'm a strong supporter of LGBTIQ rights. I've consistently taken action on LGBTIQ issues and I'd be honored to have the GLBT Alliance's endorsement. I've deeply appreciated the Alliance's support in the past.

**Q5** Please tell us about any past or current experiences or involvement you've had addressing LGBTIQ issues or work you've done to support the LGBTIQ community.

In 2016, Supervisor Leopold and I brought an item to the Board of Supervisors banning non-essential travel by County staff to North Carolina, Mississippi and any other state that passes anti-LGBTIQ laws. As you know, Santa Cruz County has had strong anti-discrimination policies in place for decades. Years ago, I worked against Prop. 8 and I have consistently spoken out in support of LGBTIQ rights and I'm always proud to show my support in the annual Gay Pride Parade.

**Q6** What historic political or civil rights struggles are you familiar with that impact LGBTIQ equality?

I'm familiar with the Stonewall Uprising, the struggle for government action on HIV/AIDS in the 1980s and beyond, the fight against discrimination in employment, housing, overnight accommodations, adoption and more. I'm familiar with Don't Ask Don't Tell and its repeal by President Obama. Marriage equality was a major battle as well (Defense of Marriage Act, the Knight Initiative, Prop 8, Supreme Court). I know that there are continuing struggles around ensuring LGBTQ students are adequately protected and supported in schools, efforts to protect transgender individuals from discrimination and more. There has been tremendous progress over the last several decades, but there are still LGBTIQ equality battles to fight and you can count on me to stand with the LGBTIQ community.

**Q7** 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 LGBTIQ community?

My goal is to be the best ally I can be. When working with minority communities I think my first job is to listen. I make an effort to be accessible and welcoming and I regularly reach out to solicit the views and recommendations of minority communities.

**Q8** Please describe any programs you know of that impact the LGBTIQ community and that are governed by or funded through the elected office you are running for? Include any suggestions you may have for improving these programs.

I'm pleased that through CORE Investments the County is funding the Diversity Center's Youth program and the 60+ program.

**Q9** If elected, how would you use your position to help further issues of importance to the LGBTIQ community?

I will consistently stand with the LGBTIQ community whether that means bringing issues to the Board of Supervisors for action, or marching in the street. I would like to partner with the LGBTIQ community on any and all issues that arise.

**Q10** If you receive the GLBT Alliance's endorsement, will you display it in your campaign literature?

**Yes, please send me the GLBT Alliance's logo (jpg file) so I can proudly announce the endorsement on my campaign literature, social media and website!**