



Boston Pride's Human Rights and Education Committee Candidate's Questionnaire

Candidate Names: Ayanna Pressley		Office Seeking: Boston City Council At Large	Incumbent: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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Please write brief paragraph explaining your experience with LGBT Community:

My work, in broad strokes, focuses on stabilizing communities and strengthening our families, no matter the family model, be it two daddy's, two mommy's, a grandparent raising a grandchild or a family of one (a common occurrence for LGBTQ seniors). I believe that all Bostonians, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, stand to benefit from my efforts to diversify our police and fire departments, ensure equal access to construction jobs for residents, including people of color and women, and better coordinate the response of the police, district attorney and medical providers in the aftermath of violence.

However, I have made an effort in my first term to address particular areas of concern to Boston's LGBTQ community:

- **Sexual education in our schools-** There is nothing controversial about providing our young people with a medically accurate, age appropriate, culturally competent sexual education curriculum, including teaching healthy behaviors and responsible decision-making. The only controversial thing would be to sit back and do nothing while our young people were left to rely on their peers, the Internet or pornography for sexual health information. The high rate of suicide attempts among our LGBTQ youth is tragic and it is critical there is an early intervention to ensure (1) bullying of LGBTQ youth is addressed at an early age, and (2) LGBTQ youth have access to teachers and counselors who can provide the necessary support during what can be an isolating and painful time in their life.
- **Public Accommodation Laws-** Several months ago, I demanded an investigation after the Cure Lounge barred black Harvard alumni and graduate students from their own private party. In recent weeks, we've seen other establishments cited for similar incidents. However, while many people associate the public accommodation laws in Boston with racial discrimination, there is a growing need to educate our licensed venues to protect our LGBTQ community. Boston's LGBTQ community is growing- which is something we should take pride in- but with the growth occurring in neighborhoods not traditionally home to significant LGBTQ populations, there is an increased need to educate licensed venues about their legal obligations. Additionally, while incidents of blatant discrimination are more easily addressed legally, we must also respond to more subtle harassment and intimidation that can take place inside our venues.
- **Supporting our transgender population-** I authored a resolution and gained the unanimous support of the entire City Council urging the Legislature to extend equal rights and protections to my transgender friends, neighbors and constituents. It is unconscionable for us to allow any member of our community to be treated as a second class citizen and denied basic protections in the workplace.