



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

Candidate Names:		Office Seeking:		Incumbent:			
Michael F. Flaherty		Boston City Council At Large		NO			
Campaign Address:		Campaign Phone:		Campaign Email:		Campaign Website:	
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Contact Name:				Contact Phone:			
Jay O'Brien				617.269.8683			

**Please write brief paragraph explaining your experience with LGBT Community:**

I am a former five-term at large member of the Boston City Council, and served as the President of the City Council for five successive one-year terms. Under my leadership as City Council President, the City of Boston finally enacted a transgender protection ordinance. I have always counted a large number of members of the GLBT among my campaign volunteers, closest political advisers, and City Hall staff, including two of my chiefs-of-staff. During my time on the City Council, I worked effectively both publicly and behind the scenes, along with my friends and supporters in Boston's GLBT community, to help persuade state legislators on the issue of same-sex marriage issue. I was the first Boston elected official to publicly support and endorse same-sex marriage in Massachusetts, at a time when the mainstream debate focused on whether civil unions should be allowed. While the marriage bill was pending in the legislature, I organized and attended the first meeting of GLBT South Boston constituents with state Senator Jack Hart and organized a similar meeting with then-State Representative Brian Wallace. I also personally lobbied former classmates from Boston College, Boston College High School, and other friends, serving in the legislature, for its passage. On a deeply personal level, my own uncle was tragically murdered, in Florida in 1994 by a man he met in a gay bar. My uncle was of a generation where he felt it necessary to lead a closeted existence, a fact which led directly to his murder in Florida, where he had a vacation home and would visit local bars as the only outlet for his orientation. His sexual orientation was a fact my uncle Jimmy kept hidden even from his own family his entire life. To this day, I feel great sorrow that my uncle was never able to live his life openly, proudly and safely in a city he loved so much.