More than 20 candidates have announced their campaigns with the hopes of becoming the next Democratic nominee for President of the United States. Meanwhile, it’s assumed that incumbent President Donald Trump will seek reelection with former Massachusetts Governor William Weld challenging Trump within the Republican Party.

Beyond that, control of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives are at stake, and thousands of state and local races will be on the ballot with tremendous ramifications for LGBTQ and ally voters.

While GLAAD does not endorse or oppose candidates for elected office, it’s important to remember that how candidates present themselves on issues and how the media cover the campaigns help to shape political outcomes, as well as the cultural narrative throughout the election season and beyond. GLAAD’s role is to ensure that candidates, the media, and voters have the information they need to bring our LGBTQ lives and issues to the dialogue in a fair, accurate and inclusive way.

Not only are we impacted by issues directly affecting us like marriage, employment nondiscrimination, so-called “conversion therapy” and more; we are also affected by issues related to health care, education, immigration, the economy, a woman’s right to choose, and many others. This is the first in a series of resources GLAAD will be providing journalists ahead of the 2020 election cycle.

LGBTQ Americans, like their straight, cisgender peers, consider so-called “kitchen table” issues at the top of their lists because they are directly impacted:

1. **Poverty**
   
   About 1-in-4 LGBTQ adults do not earn enough to be food secure, compared to 17% of straight adults.
   
   [Williams Institute, 2016]

2. **Equal Pay**
   
   One in five LGBTQ people face discrimination on equal pay and promotions.
   
   [Center for American Progress, 2018]

3. **Employment**
   
   Transgender Americans are three times more likely to be unemployed than their cisgender peers.
   
   [Center for American Progress, 2018]

4. **Income Inequality**
   
   Gay and bisexual men earned 11% less than heterosexual men.
   
   [The Society Pages, 2017]

5. **Student Loan Debt**
   
   LGBTQ college students accrue $16,000 more on debt than straight students.
   
   [Point Foundation, 2018]
1. Nondiscrimination Protections (or Lack Thereof) for LGBTQ Americans Across the USA

Americans assumed that after marriage equality was affirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court in 2015, LGBTQ Americans had achieved full equal rights. But that is not the case. While LGBTQ people are able to marry who they love, they can still be fired from their jobs, denied affordable housing, or refused service simply for being LGBTQ.

We’ve seen open discrimination play out across the country. From a college student being targeted by her peers for being LGBTQ in Texas to a landlord in Florida evicting a tenant because of his sexual orientation, anti-LGBTQ discrimination is rampant and without protections written in law, LGBTQ Americans are put in harm’s way.

In total, 26 states and the District of Columbia have some form of nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ Americans.
State-by-State Effort to Ban “Conversion Therapy” Practices

Anti-LGBTQ politicians and activists have long believed that being LGBTQ is reversible and that through “ex-gay” or “conversion therapy” practices, people could be “cured” from living their lives as LGBTQ.

That is simply not true. In fact, “ex-gay” camps could cause long-term damage to LGBTQ people. An investigative report by ABC News’ “20/20” program brought light to what kind of damage “conversion therapy” programs could cause.

Health organizations like the American Psychiatric Association (APA) have long opposed the practice altogether. And with campaigns like Born Perfect, there is now a grassroots, state-by-state effort to ban “conversion therapy” nationwide.

Where so-called “conversion therapy” practices still happen in the USA. Source: MAP (Movement Advancement Project)

Currently, 18 states and the District of Columbia ban so-called “conversion therapy” practices. But the fight is far from over. GLAAD recommends contacting Mathew Shurka (mathew@bornperfect.com) with Born Perfect who could be able to provide some first-hand experiences about surviving an “ex-gay” camp.
3. Transgender and Gender Non-conforming Acceptance

Transgender Americans, particularly women of color, are the most marginalized and often the most targeted persons in the United States. In 2018 alone, 25 transgender women of color were murdered. This follows the recent disturbing trend as 26 trans women were murdered in 2017 and 27 trans women in 2016.

The attack on transgender people in the United States doesn’t stop there, the Trump Administration has single-handedly made trans people the main target for anti-LGBTQ activists. Between President Trump’s ban on transgender service members from openly serving in our armed forces to rescinding school guidance that allowed students to use the bathroom according to their gender identity, transgender Americans have been under attack by this administration.

Recorded murders of transgender women of color

Sources:
2018: https://www.glaad.org/blog/glaad-calls-increased-and-accurate-media-coverage-transgender-murders-0
2016: https://www.glaad.org/blog/2016-was-deadliest-year-record-transgender-people
GLAAD is here to help you cover these issues thoroughly through the course of the 2020 election cycle. For a guide on how to accurately cover issues important to transgender Americans, click here. GLAAD also has a resource guide for covering issues important for gender non-conforming Americans, which you can find here.

Should any additional questions arise about the LGBTQ community, feel free to rely on GLAAD as your go-to resource.

Contact Drew Anderson at
danderson@glaad.org or 765-432-3231

www.glaad.org/2020