



LGBT DEMOCRATS OF VIRGINIA

Virginia Partisans: The PAC of LGBT Democrats of Virginia

Endorsement Questionnaire

Instructions: Please return questionnaire via email to president@vapartisans.org. At the Board's discretion, interviews may be scheduled with candidates prior to making endorsement and contribution decisions.

Note: Your answers are "on the record," will be circulated to all members of the Board, and may be shared outside the organization and published to the LGBT Democrats of Virginia website.

Candidate and Campaign Information

Name: Jaime Areizaga-Soto

Address: 1021 N. Garfield St. #524, Arlington, VA 22201

Phone: 703-624-2137

Email: Jaime@jaimeforsenate.com

Campaign Website: www.jaimeforsenate.com

Campaign Manager: Meghan Simpson

Campaign Manager Phone/Email: 434-251-2693 / Meghan@jaimeforsenate.com

Race and Election Information

Office Sought: State Senate

Indicate whether office is partisan or non-partisan: Partisan

City, County or District of office: 31st District

Select One: Challenger Incumbent Open Seat

Select One: Caucus Primary General

Election Date(s):

Biographical Information

1. Previous elected offices held: None.

2. Candidate bio (include issues relevant to LGBT Community):

Jaime Areizaga-Soto is a strong supporter of civil rights. He studied at the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and graduated from Stanford Law School. He is the Vice President of the Democratic Latino Organization of Virginia. He is a JAG Lt. Colonel in the Army National Guard, where he is proud to serve alongside gays and lesbians. He is a former White House Fellow and a lifelong Democrat. After serving as a senior Obama appointee at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Jaime resigned in April 2011 to become a candidate to represent all Virginians in Richmond.

Jaime is passionate about issues facing LGBT Virginians today. A university housemate and many long-time friends, including many Latinos/Latinas, and work colleagues throughout his life are members of the LGBT community. Jaime will fight for marriage equality, adoption rights, anti-bullying legislation and non-discrimination protections. Jaime is ready to fight Cuccinelli's backwards and hateful agenda. Jaime is 100% pro-choice and believes that women have a right to reproductive freedom. Virginia's public education system should be ranked number one in our country, instead it's funding gets slashed by Republicans in Richmond. Jaime will buck efforts to raid our schools' funding, improve teacher salaries and defend academic freedom at our public universities. Jaime understands firsthand the needs of our brave men and women in uniform and will work to get them the support and medical care they deserve. He will make sure every law-abiding resident of this country is treated fairly and has opportunities to succeed by providing in-state tuition to the children of immigrants who graduate from Virginia high schools. Jaime will fight for a clean environment and a transportation system for Northern Virginia that actually makes sense and focuses on moving people and goods to where they need to go.

3. Are you a member of the LGBT Democrats of Virginia (formerly the Virginia Partisans)? If so, when did you join?

I am not a member but a strong supporter. I have participated in previous events and am a sponsor of the LGBT Democrats of Virginia annual fundraiser next week.

4. Have you been endorsed by any LGBT organizations now or in the past? If so, please list years and races.

This is my first political campaign and I have not yet been endorsed by any LGBT Organizations. I am proud to have a host of LGBT Northern Virginia Community Leaders working on my campaign as staff and volunteers.

Activities

1. Have you attended events for, joined, or otherwise expressed support for LGBT organizations or groups?

Yes. I have attended functions at Stanford University while there, in the early 90s and as part of my community and Democratic Party involvement throughout the years. I have been an active supporter of numerous LGBT candidates for office in Virginia.

2. Have you attended events for, joined, or otherwise expressed support for the Whitman Walker Health, the Tidewater Aids Task Force, GLSEN, SMYAL, or other LGBT and LGBT-related causes or organizations?

Yes, I have attended with friends, the annual Equality Virginia Fundraising Gala.

3. Have you ever volunteered for or attended LGBT Pride, an LGBT Youth Prom, or other LGBT or LGBT-related events?

Yes, I have attended Pride parades and events in Washington DC and California over the years.

Positions – Please articulate your views on all the issues below regardless of whether they are Federal, State, or Local in nature and whether you have or, if elected, would have the ability to vote on the issues.

➤ **Discrimination Protection**

1. If elected, would you establish a written non-discrimination policy that includes sexual orientation **and** gender identity for your employees? Do you have such a policy in place for your campaign?

Definitely. Indeed, as part of the role I played as policy advisor to the Senate Democratic Caucus I coordinated with Equality Virginia's chief lobbyist in the successful approval of such a resolution in the Virginia State Senate. Furthermore, I am proud that my team on this race includes several members of the LGBT community.

2. Have you in the past, do you now, and, if elected, will you support efforts to ban discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation **and** gender identity in employment and housing? Please address Federal and State versions of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) and any relevant local laws. Please note whether you have introduced and/or co-sponsored or co-patroned legislation in the past (if not, please explain why).

Yes. I have never been in public office before, when I go to Richmond this will be one of the first pieces of legislation I sponsor. It is a most unfortunate that even on the Federal level gender identity has not been considered in versions of ENDA.

3. Have you in the past and do you still now support the repeal of the military's Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) law? Do you oppose any efforts to implement exclusionary policies based on sexual orientation for the Virginia National Guard? Please note whether you have introduced and/or co-sponsored or co-patroned legislation in the past (if not, please explain why).

Yes, I have supported the repeal and participated in the US Army survey that showed a majority of members of the US Army opposed DADT. I have served our country in uniform and will continue to serve proudly alongside gays and lesbians. I strongly oppose any exclusionary policies based on sexual orientation.

➤ **Marriage and Partnership**

4. Have you in the past, do you now, and, if elected, will you support efforts to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA)? Please note whether you have introduced and/or co-sponsored or co-patroned legislation in the past (if not, please explain why).

I support the full repeal of DOMA and full Marriage Equality.

5. Have you in the past, do you now, and, if elected, will you support efforts to repeal the Marshall-Newman Amendment to the Virginia Constitution? Please note whether you have introduced and/or co-sponsored or co-patroned legislation in the past (if not, please explain why).

I will work tirelessly to repeal the hateful Marshall-Newman Amendment.

6. Do you believe that same-sex couples should enjoy the same rights, benefits and responsibilities as their straight counterparts? Have you in the past, do you now, and, if elected, will you support efforts to legally recognize same-sex marriage by both the Federal and Virginia government? Please note whether you have introduced and/or co-sponsored or co-patroned legislation in the past (if not, please explain why).

Yes I do believe that same-sex couples deserve to share the same rights, benefits and responsibilities. Marriage equality and adoption rights are issues that are very important to me. I will continuously fight for gay equality. The LGBT community will have a strong voice in Richmond who is ready to work to protect the values we share.

➤ **Education and Schools**

7. Have you in the past, do you now, and, if elected, will you support Family Life Education and guidance programs in public schools that offer age-appropriate, non-judgmental information on sexuality, tolerance, sexual orientation, gender identity, sexually transmitted diseases, and contraception? Please note whether you have introduced and/or co-sponsored or co-patroned legislation in the past (if not, please explain why).

Yes, I will support Family Life Education. It is important not only because of the learning and guidance shared through Family Life, but it would also be a catalyst in stopping bullying in our schools.

8. Do you consider harassment of LGBT students because of their real or perceived sexual orientation and/or gender identity to be a form of bullying? Would you support legislation that aims to lower the incidents of, and directs schools to put an end to, bullying in public schools and facilities?

Absolutely!

9. Do you support the formation of Gay/Straight Alliance clubs (GSAs) in schools? Have you in the past, do you now, and, if elected, will you support efforts to promote, encourage and provide support and resources for GSAs in schools?

Yes. GSAs are vital to develop communication across the student body and, consequently, a critically important safe learning environment for our children. I believe it is important for our youth to have the opportunity to experience diversity. Whether that diversity includes race, religion, ethnicity or sexual orientation and gender identification. We must teach our children tolerance and acceptance.

10. Do you support the "It Gets Better Project"?

Yes.

➤ **HIV/AIDS Prevention, Testing and Treatment**

11. Do you support public funding for HIV/AIDS prevention, testing and treatment facilities? Have you in the past, do you now, and, if elected, will you support efforts to increase funding for and access to these facilities throughout all regions of Virginia?

Yes.

12. Do you support free access to HIV/AIDS testing at jail and prison facilities? If so, would you support programs that encourage inmates to get tested for HIV/AIDS?

Yes.

➤ **Choice and Contraception**

13. Have you in the past, do you now, and, if elected, will you support a woman's right to choose abortion and to access abortion, birth control and contraception? Would you vote to limit access to abortion, birth control and/or contraception in anyway? If so, how and under what circumstances?

I always have been 100% pro-choice. This is an issue that is very personal to me. A close relative died from a back-alley abortion before 1973. Cuccinelli wants to shut down all reproductive health clinics. I will go to Richmond to fight against this extreme assault on women's rights.

➤ **Other**

14. Choosing political leadership is a key responsibility for every elected official. Will you commit to making support for full equality a major factor in your leadership selection decisions?

I will never stop fighting for women's right to reproductive freedom, and I pledge to cast my vote for Senate Democratic caucus leadership that stand with us and our Democratic values - including pro-LGBT issues and pro-choice.

15. Do you believe it is important for both LGBT individuals and allies to "come out"—i.e. share their status as an LGBT individual or an ally to the LGBT community with the public? Do you believe it is important for public officials, in particular, to encourage and support LGBT individuals and allies in "coming out"?

Yes. LGBT equality is important, as injustice for one of us is injustice for all of us.

16. If not otherwise described above, how have you advocated for the LGBT community in the community at-large in the past (i.e. have you spoken out publicly for policies at your place of business, testified before government bodies, adopted written policies for your employees, marched for equal rights, etc.)?

I speak out against injustice and unequal treatment at every opportunity in my personal, professional, military and public role.

17. If not otherwise described above, in what ways have you worked to include LGBT and other minority individuals in your personal and/or professional life? In what ways have you worked to be a role model for inclusion, tolerance and acceptance of LGBT and other minority individuals?

LGBT and other minority individuals have been and are an essential part of my life. I have numerous LGBT friends with whom I socialize on a regular basis and others with which I have worked on the private and public sector. I have had active interaction also with minority groups (Latinos, African-Americans, Arab-Americans and Asian-Americans). I see myself as a bridge among all these groups, as well as the LGBT community. I have a significant number of friends/colleagues that are members of the LGBT and minority communities. Specifically, I am close to a large number of Latino gays and lesbians. In my leadership role, I will be a strong advocate for cross communication and support.

18. Please use the space below to provide any additional information you would like us to know about your candidacy.

LGBT issues are of utmost importance to me. My candidacy has reflected my commitment at all levels: campaign literature, speeches, members, volunteers and support.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please contact president@vapartisans.org with any questions.