

# 2020 East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club Endorsement Questionnaire

Thank you for your interest in obtaining an endorsement from the East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club.

Per the Club's bylaws, to be eligible for endorsement, a candidate must be a registered Democrat. All candidates must also complete this candidate questionnaire to be considered for an endorsement. Endorsements are decided by the general membership, and candidates must receive at least 60% of votes cast to be endorsed.

The deadline to complete your questionnaire via Google forms is Friday, August 21, 2020 at 11:59pm for the August 26, 2020 East Bay Stonewall endorsement meeting for the November 2020 presidential election. Any candidate submitting a questionnaire that is received after the deadline will not appear on the endorsement ballot.

Please return your completed questionnaire via Google forms by clicking submit at the bottom of this form. All form submissions are final. If you have questions, please contact Amy Fitzgerald, EBSDC PAC chair via email at [afitzlap@gmail.com](mailto:afitzlap@gmail.com).

Email address \*

aziz4acwd@gmail.com

Name (First, Last) \*

Aziz Akbari

Are you a registered Democrat? \*

Yes

No

Office you are seeking? (e.g. City Council, School Board, Supervisor, etc) \*

Board of Directors

Jurisdiction? \*

Alameda County Water District

District? \*

At-Large

Are you an East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club member in good standing as of August 19, 2020? If you are unsure, email [eastbaystonewalldems@gmail.com](mailto:eastbaystonewalldems@gmail.com). \*

Yes

No

I self-identify as: (check all boxes that apply; note these identifiers will be used publicly during our endorsement process.) \*

- Gay
- Lesbian
- Transgender
- Gender non-conforming
- Bisexual
- Queer
- Straight
- Other: .....

How have you participated in East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club activities, and/or supported the Club other ways? What other LGBTQ+ organizations are you affiliated with and in what capacity? What other Democratic clubs are you affiliated with? \*

I am now a brand new member of the East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club, and I look forward to being a part of this organization. I am currently a member of the Tri-City Democratic Forum (TCDF) and South Alameda County Young Dems (SACYD), and am the Vice President of the Muslim Democrats and Friends Club (MDF).

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Using specific examples, please identify the causes you have advocated for and the ways you have helped advance LGBTQ+ rights or otherwise helped foster a community of inclusivity for LGBTQ+ individuals and families. \*

As a current Director of the ACWD, the LGBTQ+ community was one of the constituencies on my mind when we pushed for the low-income rate assistance program (called Help on Tap). This program gives a \$25 water bill rebate for low-income residents. LGBTQ+ Californians, particularly those of color, suffer wage gaps and pay discrimination and, on average, make less than the median income in Alameda County (according to the Williams Institute at UCLA). Access to safe, clean, and affordable water is a human right, and access to that should not vary based on who people love, the color of one's skin, or one's socioeconomic status. If re-elected, I would continue to push for equitable access for our most precious resource.

Another area of focus has been transparency. I believe that transparency is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for inclusivity. As part of this effort, the District has made commitments to improving reporting processes (especially as part of our rate-setting process). We've also made an easier-to-use website, and will soon roll out an app to track real-time water usage. As a new member of the East Bay Stonewall Club, I would love for the club to be part of that process.

On top of all of this, I pushed our District to look at crafting a diversity initiative as part of our HR policies. This is still in a very early stage, but I've made it clear that I want the District to reflect the diversity in our community.

Have you previously supported LGBTQ+ candidates for office? If yes, did that include financial support? \*

Absolutely! Throughout my life, I have believed that the Democratic leadership and political offices need to reflect the diversity that we find in our Party, and have supported candidates of all backgrounds. But, as a young Californian who's still relatively new to electoral politics, you won't see my name over the threshold for FEC filings.

Which LGBTQ+ organizations and elected officials have formally endorsed you for this race?

\*

I am not aware of any LGBTQ+ organizations, other than this Club, that are making endorsements in this race. However, I will certainly apply for them should they come up. A full list of my endorsements can be found at [azizakbari.com/endorsements](http://azizakbari.com/endorsements).

What other LGBTQ+ community members and/or organizations support your candidacy? \*

I am not aware of any LGBTQ+ organizations, other than this Club, that are making endorsements in this race. However, I will apply for them should they come up.

Please describe a policy/goal that is part of your formal platform that benefits the LGTBQ+ community? \*

I would refer back to my previous answer regarding our low-income rate assistance program, our commitment to transparency, and my push for a diversity initiative at the District. In particular, I have made a public call to increase the threshold of eligibility for the rate assistance program as well as the bill credit amount. As I described in my previous answer, the LGBTQ+ community is heavily impacted by pay discrimination. By implementing my proposal, we would be able to help more of our community members so that no one is choosing between paying their water bill or putting food on the table.

What makes you uniquely qualified for the office and how are you different or unique from the other candidates in your race? \*

I am a grassroots candidate, and by far the youngest to ever serve on the Board. Since my first run for public office in 2012, I have refused contributions from PAC's, lobbyists, and special interest groups. Our government, at all levels, needs innovative leaders who are willing to step forward and enact our shared vision for a progressive, inclusive, and equitable society. In one term, I've worked hard to make water access equitable and the District transparent. I have shown that I keep my promises and live my values. With your support, I pledge my continued leadership to move ACWD forward. I would be honored to receive the East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club's endorsement.

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