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Rhode Island Democratic Party LGBTQ Caucus By-Laws

Revised: December 5th, 2017

Definitions:

RIDP or RI Democratic Party= Rhode Island Democratic Party

Executive Committee= Executive Committee of the Democratic Party LGBTQ Caucus

State Committee= Democratic State Committee

LGBTQ = Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered and Queer

Article I: Name and Affiliations

Section 1. Name

The official name of this organization shall be the Democratic Party Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Caucus of Rhode Island. Informally, the organization shall be known as the "LGBTQ Caucus" or "Caucus".

Section 2. Purpose

The purpose of the LGBTQ Caucus of Rhode Island shall be to advocate for LGBTQ equality within and through the Democratic Party of the State of Rhode Island.

Section 3. Affiliations

This Caucus shall be influenced and guided by the platforms and policies of the Rhode Island Democratic Party on the state level, and the Democratic National Committee on the national level. It shall be considered a subsidiary of the Rhode Island Democratic Party.

Section 4. Scope

This caucus shall not take any action which is in violation of these Bylaws, the Constitution of the United States, the Rhode Island Constitution, national, state, and local law, the Plan of Organization of the Rhode Island Democratic Party, or the platform of the Rhode Island Democratic Party. Caucus related activities and efforts shall be done under the discretion of the RIDP Chairman.

Article II: Object and Policy

Section 1. Object & Vision

The LGBTQ Caucus of Rhode Island is to work within the Rhode Island Democratic Party, providing a voice and representation of LGBTQ issues within the party structure; candidate training, community outreach and involvement, and actively supporting issues through local newspaper op-eds, comment sections, message boards, etc.

Section 2. Charge

This caucus and its members shall take an active interest in local, state, and national affairs; participate in community events; participate, as a group, in civic engagement projects including, but not limited to voter registration drives and voter education. **Caucuses will be required to participate in at least one (1) community service project per year.**

Section 3. Party Nominees

This caucus and its members may support actively, and by appropriate means, the nominees of the Rhode Island Democratic Party in national, state and local elections. This caucus, as a subsidiary of the Rhode Island Democratic Party, shall not endorse or support the candidacy of any person for public office prior to nomination by the Rhode Island Democratic Party; however, individual members may support candidates prior to nomination. Nothing herein shall be construed as to restrict an individual's right to support candidates of their choosing outside of the construct of this caucus.

Section 4. Resources

This caucus, as a subsidiary of the RI Democratic Party, shall seek in all of its operations the advice and counsel of the Rhode Island Democratic Party Staff and Leadership. As an arm of the State Party, access to Party headquarters for meetings, events, etc., is open to the caucus upon request and availability.

Article III: Membership

Section 1. Policy

The membership of the LGBTQ Caucus of Rhode Island shall be open to all registered Democrats in Rhode Island. Membership will be open to all those

- a. Who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, or Queer
- or
- b. Who believe in, and support, the purpose of the LGBTQ Caucus

Section 1. Classifications

There shall be two (2) classifications of membership:

- a. **Active.** Any registered Democrat who has attended no less than three (3) meetings in a six (6) month period shall be eligible for Active membership. Active members

that attend less than the required three (3) meetings in a six (6) month period will be deemed in poor standing. Active members will also give dues once a year in the amount of (ENTER AMOUNT) to secure their ability to vote on Caucus issues.

- b. **Honorary.** Any registered Democrat who is not an Active member of the I'm ABLED Caucus, and who professes and supports the principles and purpose of the I'm ABLED Caucus, shall be eligible for honorary membership as appointed by the Executive Committee

Section 3. Meetings

The caucus shall meet no less than one (1) time per month, including any events that the caucus chooses to plan.

Section 4. Quorum

A quorum to conduct business at each general body meeting shall be 1/4 (one-quarter) of active membership, rounded up.

Article IV: Caucus Executive Committee

The affairs of this caucus shall be conducted by the Caucus Executive Committee, which shall meet at a minimum of once a quarter, between Caucus-wide meetings. Such meetings shall be called by the Chair or upon written request of the majority of the members of the Caucus Executive Committee. The time and place for such meetings shall be determined by the Chair, with the approval of the Caucus Executive Board.

Section 1. Voting members

Voting members of the Caucus Executive Committee shall consist of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Active Caucus members that are in good standing.

Section 2. Non-voting, ex-officio members

Past Chairs shall serve as nonvoting, ex-officio members of the Caucus Executive Committee. The current Chair may appoint an Executive Assistant and other positions as approved by the Caucus Executive Committee as non-voting ex-officio members of said committee.

Section 3. Quorum

Quorum shall exist at any meeting of the Caucus Executive Committee when two-thirds (2/3) of the members of the Caucus Executive Committee are present.

Section 4. Eligibility for office

Any active member in good standing shall be eligible to hold elected office in this caucus.

Section 5. Election of state officers

All I'm ABLED Caucus Executive officers shall be elected at the first general body meeting of each odd-numbered calendar year beginning in 2019. The first slate of officers elected in 2018 shall be considered "Interim" until the election of executive committee officers in 2019.

Section 6. Vacancies

In the case of a vacancy within the Caucus Executive Board, the Chair is to nominate an Active member of the Caucus to fill the vacancy, or chose a member of the Caucus Executive Board to fill the vacancy, nominating an Active member of the Caucus to fill the new vacancy. If the Chair position is to become vacant, the Vice-Chair will assume the duties of Chair and fill subsequent vacancies as detailed above. In all cases, all nominations to fill vacancies by the Chair shall be approved by the entirety of the Caucus at the following full Caucus meeting.

Section 7. Removal of Members

Members of the Caucus Executive Committee may be removed from office under the following provisions:

- a. The member is no longer an Active member; or,
- b. The member misses two (2) Caucus Executive Committee meetings without sending a proxy vote; or,
- c. The Chair may recommend to the Caucus Executive Committee that any member be removed from office. The Chair shall state the nature of the charges in writing to the Executive Committee at least twenty (20) days prior to any Caucus Executive Committee meeting. A two-thirds (2/3) vote of those present at a full body meeting shall be necessary to remove any officer.
- d. All documentation of removal of officers shall be forwarded to the Caucus Secretary for safekeeping and a copy sent to the Rhode Island Democratic Party Chair. An individual who has been removed from office may appeal to the Caucus Executive Committee for reinstatement. A vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those present at the Committee meeting shall be necessary for reinstatement.

Section 8. Proxy Votes

Any member may designate an Active Member from the group he or she represents to serve as his or her alternate for a Caucus Executive Committee meeting by notifying, in writing, the presiding officer prior to the call to order for such a meeting; provided, however, no person may serve as an alternate for more than one member at any meeting and no one may cast more than one vote.

Article V: Officers

Section 1. Officers

The elected officers of this caucus shall consist of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. A majority of the officers of the Executive Committee shall identify as LGBTQ.

Section 2. Duties of the Chair

The duties of the Chair shall be to uphold and enforce the provisions of these by-laws; to organize and administer the caucus; to preside over all meetings; to represent the caucus at all official functions; to submit a final report to the Chair of the Rhode Island Democratic Party at the conclusion of each year; and to chair the Caucus Executive Committee. The Chair reserves the ability to create subcommittees when a need is presented for one. The chair and duration of the subcommittee shall be determined by the chair and submitted to the whole of the Caucus Executive Committee for approval. All appointments by the Caucus Chair shall be submitted to the Caucus Executive Committee, which may veto any appointment within 10 days by majority vote.

Section 3. Duties of the Vice-Chair

The duties of the Vice-Chair shall be to advise and assist the Chair in the administration of the caucus and to assume the duties of the Caucus Executive Board in the absence of the Chair. The Vice-Chair will also supervise all of the Caucus' subcommittees.

Section 4. Duties of the Secretary

The duties of the Secretary shall be to maintain the files of the caucus; to keep an accurate list of Caucus membership; to record the minutes of all meetings; to submit all official records to the Democratic State Party archives; and, with the approval of the Chair, to conduct the official correspondence of the caucus. Persons, as specified by the Caucus Executive Committee, will be sent notices of each Caucus Executive Committee meeting. The Secretary should send notices at least (7) seven days in advance of the meeting. Notices will be accompanied by the proposed minutes of the most recent meeting and by an agenda for the upcoming meeting.

Section 5. Duties of the Treasurer

The duties of the Treasurer shall be to keep an accurate account of all financial transactions; to compile periodic financial status reports; to file financial reports as required with the State Board of Elections.

Section 10. Minutes of Caucus Executive Committee

During each Caucus Executive Meeting, a written report that summarizes goals, achievements, and actions will be submitted to the Executive Committee two weeks after the last meetings.

Section 12. Diversity and Inclusion

In the election of officers the caucus shall make all efforts to balance the Caucus Executive Committee to reflect all interest groups of the caucus. The caucus will make every effort to balance the committee with respect to age, gender, gender identity and expression, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, and religion.

Article VI: Approval of By-Laws

Section 1. Approval of By-Laws

Any and all by-law changes or revisions must be approved by the Chairman of the Rhode Island Democratic Party pending a vote of approval by the Caucus.