



Attend A Candidate Town Hall

A PFLAG Votes 2026 Toolkit from PFLAG National

Attending a town hall is a powerful way to get the answers you need from candidates about issues affecting your community; this information is critical to helping folks make an informed decision when they go to cast their ballot. You can attend a candidate town hall on your own or organize a group to attend to make your message even stronger.

Why Town Halls Matter

- **Public Accountability.** Town halls give candidates the opportunity to answer questions in a public setting, putting their positions on the record. This creates transparency, allows advocates to track campaign commitments, and provides a basis for holding elected officials accountable once they take office.
- **Public Awareness.** Asking thoughtful questions about LGBTQ+ issues helps raise awareness among everyone in attendance, including other voters, community leaders, and the media. Even if a candidate's response is imperfect, the conversation itself highlights issues that might otherwise go unaddressed and encourages broader public discussion.
- **Constituent Power.** Strong participation from LGBTQ+ people, families, and allies demonstrates that these issues matter to voters. Candidates pay attention to the concerns they hear directly from constituents, and visible advocacy can help shape their priorities and future policy decisions.
- **Direct Engagement.** Town halls provide a rare opportunity to engage candidates face to face. Asking thoughtful questions can encourage candidates to clarify their positions, commit to specific actions, or reconsider their stance after hearing directly from members of the community.

No matter how you plan to attend a candidate Town Hall—whether as part of a chapter, a group of PFLAG advocates, with your family, or on your own—let us know! PFLAG National is always happy to support you, and keeping us informed also allows us to track our PFLAG Votes advocacy efforts happening across the country. [Email the Advocacy Team at advocacy@pflag.org](mailto:advocacy@pflag.org) with photos, updates and questions when they arise.

Here are some tips to help you prepare for attending a town hall.

How to Find a Town Hall

Town halls are often announced through a variety of community and campaign channels. Here are a few places to start:

- **Candidate websites and newsletters.** Sign up for email updates or check the candidate's events page regularly.
- **Social media.** Follow candidates and their campaigns on social media for announcements about town halls and other public events.
- **Local press.** Community newspapers, television stations, and radio outlets often publish event calendars and candidate appearances.
- **Civic organizations.** Organizations like the League of Women Voters and local chambers of commerce frequently host or publicize candidate forums and town halls.
- **Community organizations.** Grassroots organizations, neighborhood associations, and groups like Indivisible often share information about upcoming events in your area

During the Town Hall

- **Prepare in advance.** Develop thoughtful questions, specific points, good data, and a clear agenda. Ask short questions of candidates that focus solely on the issue you are there to address. **Sample questions can be found in the next section.**
- **Connect with campaign staff.** Identify staff members ahead of time and ask if there's a process for registering to ask a question.
- **Attend in a group.** If possible, participate with your chapter, coalition partners, or another group. Consider wearing the same color or button to show unity. A visible group with a shared agenda is harder to ignore.
- **Bring your personal story.** Limit your story to about one minute, explaining why the issue is so important to you personally and how it affects you and your loved ones.
- **Be respectful.** Speak politely, and avoid carrying disrespectful signs or standing near those who do. And remember, if you are at a candidate town hall representing PFLAG, you must maintain an appearance of non-partisanship. Do not ask candidates of different parties different questions or treat candidates of different parties differently.

- **Hold your ground.** Don't allow the candidate to dodge your question. Maintain a respectful insistence, and never interrupt a speaker, whether a candidate, staffer, or attendee.

Sample Questions

The questions you ask should depend on the elected official holding the town hall. Good questions for your Member of Congress might be different from questions you'd want to ask your state legislators. However, the questions below should give you a good starting point, and you can always [reach out to advocacy@pflag.org](mailto:reachouttoadvocacy@pflag.org) for additional guidance.

- Schools are under pressure to abandon trans-inclusive policies, like allowing trans students to access facilities aligned with their gender identity. Abandoning these policies would make trans students less safe. What will you do to ensure every child has a safe and healthy learning environment?
- Schools and libraries around the country are pulling books and curricula that deal with the history of racism in the United States or that discuss LGBTQ+ people, especially transgender people. What will you do to ensure that every child gets a well-rounded and accurate education free from censorship?
- Healthcare is expensive and difficult to access for many Americans, and that is becoming especially true for transgender young people. Best practice medical care for trans youth is banned in a majority of states, and even in states where it is legal, hospitals are being pressured to cease providing this care. What will you do to protect the rights of parents, families, and doctors to make medical decisions without government interference?
- LGBTQ+ people are not explicitly protected from discrimination under federal law and, in 2025, Iowa became the first state to remove civil rights protections from a previously protected group when it amended its state civil rights law to exclude trans people. What will you do to protect LGBTQ+ people from discrimination?
- Anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric has increased in recent years, with at least one Congressperson using a slur for transgender people during a televised congressional hearing. What will you do to combat this hateful and discriminatory rhetoric?

After the Town Hall

- **Follow up.** Reinforce your presence and comments by following up after a town hall meeting with a phone call or email to the candidate's campaign office. Send along any resources that support your position. Additionally, make sure to thank the organizers of the town hall.
- **Keep Engaging.** Continue attending town halls and showing interest—consistent participation makes it harder for your voice to be ignored.
- **Share Your Experience.** Talk about your town hall experience with friends, family, and on social media. If you are speaking as a PFLAG chapter or member, remember not to make statements supporting or opposing political parties, in accordance with 501(c)(3) guidelines.
- **Keep participating in other *PFLAG Votes* efforts!** [Visit our *PFLAG Votes* website](#) to find other ways to advocate for our LGBTQ+ loved ones this election season.