

**NEBRASKA DEMOCRATS
LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDERED (LGBT)
CAUCUS**

2006 STATE PARTY CONVENTION REPORT

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- 1) David Hahn vs. Dave Heineman Debate at State Fair, Saturday, August 26th, at 1:30 p.m., in the Open Air Auditorium.
- 2) Next LGBT Caucus Meeting, Friday, September 22, at 7 p.m., Reading Grounds, 40th & Farnam, Omaha.
- 3) Election of LGBT Caucus Officers.
- 4) Volunteer for Democratic Candidates that Support the LGBT Community.

BRIEF EXPLANATION: Every two years, the Nebraska State Democratic Party convenes a convention for the election of officers, to modify the Party platform, to feature candidates and their campaigns, and to provide all delegates statewide networking opportunities. The convention location rotates among Nebraska's three Congressional Districts (CDs). This year's convention occurred in Grand Island, CD 3, Friday, August 18 through Sunday, August 20.

BRIEF HISTORY OF LGBT CAUCUS: During the June 2004 convention, LGBT Democratic activists worked to change State Party Rules to allow the development of minority caucuses and to allow the Chair of the newly formed caucuses to serve on the State Party Executive Committee in order to give minorities a voice in Party politics, decisions, etc. In August 2004, representatives from all three of Nebraska's CDs convened an organizational meeting at State Party Headquarters in Lincoln. More than a dozen representatives developed the prototype bylaws used to model other minority caucuses. Officers were elected and the caucus started to meet on a monthly basis. During the first two years, the LGBT Caucus sponsored forums educating other Democrats and the public about LGBT community issues, particularly focusing on School-Based Anti-Bullying legislation sponsored by State Senator Gwen Howard.

A brief review of LGBT Caucus Accomplishments:

- * Ran Nebraska's first openly lesbian or gay candidate (Barbara Baier) and won a seat on the Lincoln Board of Education.
- * Developed a web-site, www.lgbtdemocrats.org
- * Sponsored two Anti-Bullying youth forums.
- * Worked with City officials in both Lincoln and Omaha on LGBT issues.
- * Wrote numerous articles on LGBT issues, e.g., DOMA and its effects, the problems with Federal Marriage Amendment, etc. for Democratic Party publications.
- * Successfully elected LGBT Caucus members to numerous leadership positions on county and state levels of the Party.
- * Interviewed numerous LGBT community leaders and allies on LGBT issues and televised these interviews across the Nebraska Time Warner Cable network. (Can also view them on the web-site.)
- * Sponsored a workshop on successfully running qualified LGBT candidates.
- * Modified the State Party Platform to include LGBT issues.

- * Mentored other minority communities, helping them to establish their own caucuses.
- * Networked with Labor, Women and Youth organizations.
- * Met with our elected officials throughout the state and on the federal level to discuss LGBT issues and advocate support for our civil rights.

2006 CONVENTION DEBRIEFING:

- * LGBT Caucus sponsored a hospitality room with more than 70 convention attendees visiting.
- * Modified the State Party Platform to include: Support for Anti-Bullying Legislation; Support for public school administrators and teachers to teach and discuss the cultural, artistic and historical contributions of the LGBT community to American government and society; Support to rescind the U.S. Military's "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" Policy and replace it with non-discrimination of LGBT military personnel.
- * Successfully retained Platform language that supports the civil rights of LGBT individuals and their families and protects them from punitive measures such as Nebraska's Defense of Marriage Amendment and Federal Marriage Amendment.
- * Successfully elected LGBT delegates to leadership positions in the State Party.
- * Met with numerous elected officials and candidates to discuss LGBT issues and the need for their support.
- * Had approximately 20 new LGBT community members and allies sign up as caucus members.
- * Elected LGBT Caucus Officers: Lin Quenzer, Chair (Lincoln); Tom Dorsch, Vice Chair (Beatrice); Melissa Rigney, Secretary (Omaha); Larry Wikoff, Treasurer (Lincoln); Victoria Lavin, First District Chair (Beatrice); Michael Gordon, Second District Chair (Omaha); Brent Hothis, Third District Chair (Hastings).

WHAT IS NEEDED FROM YOU:

The convention made clear that gubernatorial candidate David Hahn is a thinking, caring candidate that is not afraid to vocally support the LGBT community and its issues.

On Saturday, August 26th, David Hahn will be debating Gov. Dave Heineman at the Nebraska State Fair in the Open Air Auditorium at 1:30 p.m. It is critically important that you and your friends and family be there to support Mr. Hahn and to learn more about his vision for Nebraska.

Volunteers are needed for the Hahn campaign, www.hahnfornebraska.org . You can volunteer for the phone bank, donate, canvas precincts, write letters to newspapers across the state, help with fund raisers, sponsor house parties, and more by calling Andrew at 402-742-2111. **THE SOONER THE BETTER!**

The following candidates in the Lancaster County/City of Lincoln area are supportive of the LGBT community. They need your help to win in November. To volunteer or donate, call:
 Maxine Moul for Congress - www.moulforcongress.com - 402-474-6685
 Danielle Nantkes - State Senator for Legislative District 46 - www.daniellenantkes.com - 402-432-3394 .
 Bill Avery - State Senator for Legislative District 28 - www.averyforlegislature.com - 402-525-3399.
 Amanda McGill - State Senator for Legislative District - www.amandamcgill.com - 402-613-1028 .

Call 1(800)677-7068 for Nebraska State Party for other candidates and contact information.

FINAL NOTES

* LGBT Caucus representatives and Anne Boyle (Former State Party Chair) and Rev. Dick Turner will meet with Sen. Ben Nelson on Friday, August 25th to discuss our concerns with his platform regarding LGBT issues.

*** When volunteering (if you feel comfortable), please mention that you are volunteering as a member of the LGBT Caucus. This builds political capital. (Same for when you donate money to campaigns.)**

* NEXT LGBT CAUCUS MEETING IS: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22ND, READING GROUNDS, 40TH & FARNAM, OMAHA, 7 P.M.

* FALL & EARLY WINTER EVENTS: 2 to 3 fund raisers in Lincoln, Hastings & Omaha; Meet & Greet the Candidates Opportunities in Lincoln and Omaha; LGBT Voters Guide conducted by Citizens for Equal Protection.

* Increase LGBT Caucus membership.

* Encourage LGBT community members and their allies to attend their county's monthly central committee meetings to be able to be part of the decision making process.

* Start to field qualified candidates for spring elections. Please contact us if you are interested.

* Sponsor additional educational forums.

PLEASE ENCOURAGE FRIENDS & FAMILY TO SHARE THEIR E-MAIL ADDRESSES AND OTHER CONTACT INFORMATION WITH THE CAUCUS SO WE CAN KEEP YOU INFORMED. ALL IDENTITIES AND CONTACT INFORMATION WILL BE KEPT STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND WILL NOT BE SHARED WITH ANYONE OR ANY ENTITY.