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# TURN OUT 2016: THE LGBTQ VOTE & BATTLEGROUND FLORIDA

**This November, a growing and highly engaged LGBTQ voting bloc in Florida will play a pivotal role in the presidential, senatorial and other down-ballot races. Today, there are an estimated 565,800 LGBTQ<sup>1</sup> voters living in Florida — a substantial population given that the state was won in the last three presidential elections by an average of 230,579 votes.<sup>2</sup>**

This November, there are 9.4 million LGBTQ voters in the United States. Turnout among LGBTQ voters is also reliably high. This bloc was a crucial piece of the puzzle for President Obama's victory: in the last election, President Obama received 76 percent of all LGB votes,<sup>3</sup> according to national exit polls. In total, roughly 6 million LGB voters cast a ballot in 2012 -- an election President Obama won by just under 5 million votes. Polling this year showed Secretary Clinton's support among LGBTQ voters is running even higher than President Obama at 84 percent.

## DONALD TRUMP, MARCO RUBIO AND MIKE PENCE: NOT HELPING

Floridians will see three of the worst anti-LGBTQ politicians in America on their ballots this fall: Donald Trump, Mike Pence and Marco Rubio. Both Donald Trump and Marco Rubio shamefully responded to the massacre of 49 LGBTQ individuals at Pulse nightclub in Orlando, by thinking of themselves first. Donald Trump insisted that the shooting may not have taken place if more of the victims had been armed and delusionally bragged about fictional support from the LGBTQ community in the immediate wake of the shooting. Marco Rubio used the shooting as an excuse to flip-flop on his decision not to seek re-election despite a dismal and across-the-board history of opposing LGBTQ rights.

In fact, on the two-month anniversary of the shooting, both Trump and Rubio courted anti-LGBTQ activists just 10 miles from the site of the tragedy in Orlando. Among the organizations attending was the Liberty Counsel, which supports and defends archaic laws criminalizing homosexuality with harsh punishments around the world, and has condemned President Obama and the U.S. government for speaking out against such laws, saying, "America should not be trying to make that country act in an immoral way." Beyond their anti-equality stance on marriage, here's how Trump and Pence have committed to rolling back LGBTQ equality.

- Vowing to roll back nationwide marriage equality by appointing Supreme Court justices willing to help overturn Obergefell.
- Pledging to sign the so-called "First Amendment Defense Act," or FADA, legislation that would enable taxpayer-funded discrimination against LGBTQ people in the federal government.
- Backing Pence's right to discriminate bill, which intended to allow Indiana businesses to discriminate and deny services to LGBTQ people because of who they are or whom they love.



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- Pence's effort to divert HIV funding to promote the abusive practice of so-called "conversion therapy."
- Undermining the U.S. global efforts to advance LGBTQ equality through our foreign policy.
- Opposing Department of Education guidance on transgender students' right to access bathrooms consistent with their gender identity.

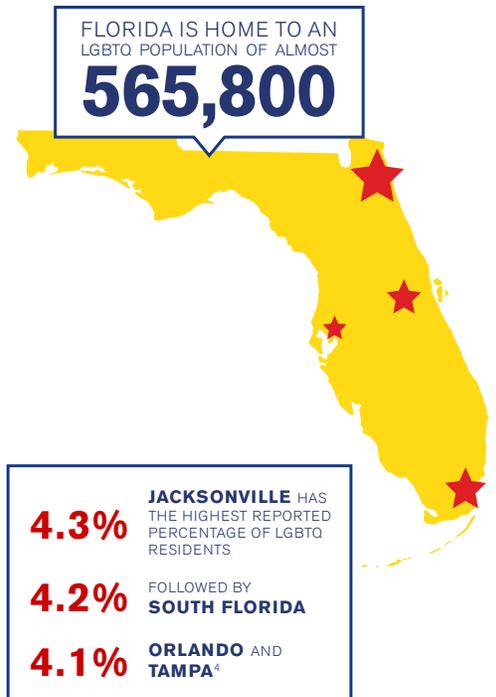
## HILLARY CLINTON AND TIM KAINE: KNOWN CHAMPIONS FOR EQUALITY

LGBTQ and pro-equality voters are also looking to the top of the ticket for an ally who will keep building on the progress of the last 8 years, and crucially, sign the Equality Act into law. Hillary Clinton has laid out the most robust plan for advancing LGBTQ equality of any presidential candidate ever -- from championing the Equality Act, to wiping out HIV, to addressing hate violence and more.

In September, Tim Kaine addressed more than 3,600 LGBTQ advocates and allies at [HRC's National Dinner](#). There, he shared his and Hillary Clinton's devotion to LGBTQ equality and rebuked Trump's attempts to pander to the LGBTQ community -- pandering that started in the wake of the tragedy in Orlando. Unlike Trump, when Kaine was in Orlando recently, he paid tribute to the 49 LGBTQ people and allies who died at Pulse nightclub. That evening, just before the presidential debate, Kaine joined HRC supporters at a debate party where he spoke strongly in favor of LGBTQ rights and working for full federal equality.

Most Americans are unaware that today, in 31 states -- including Florida -- LGBTQ people are still at risk for being hired, fired, evicted or denied services because of who they are. [The Equality Act](#), a top priority for LGBTQ voters, would rectify that by adding these protections for LGBTQ people into our longstanding civil rights laws. This law has bipartisan backing in Congress and the support of more than 80 leading companies -- and the nonpartisan Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) found this year that [71 percent of Americans](#) and 70% of Floridians favor such a bill. In fact, 84 percent of all voters already believe it's a law we already have on the books.

What's more, there is little support for North Carolina's HB2-style discriminatory laws nationally. PRRI's August poll found [64 percent of voters nationally oppose HB2-style laws](#), while only 35 percent of Americans support them. In addition, 58 percent of Floridians<sup>5</sup> said small-business owners should not be able to discriminate based on their religious beliefs.



<sup>1</sup> Derived from state by state analysis on percentage of LGBT population released by Gallup and compared with overall state population. Gallup report (<http://www.gallup.com/poll/160517/lgbt-percentage-highest-lowest-north-dakota.aspx>) is co-authored by Gary J. Gates, a national expert in LGBT demographics, and the Williams Distinguished Scholar at the Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law.

<sup>2</sup> Average of vote difference in Florida general election results for 2004, 2008, and 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Exit polls did not ask demographic information to identify transgender voters.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/42-percent-of-south-florida-residents-are-lgbt-21st-highest-in-the-nation-7548644>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.miaminewtimes.com/news/70-percent-of-floridians-favor-lgbt-nondiscrimination-laws-even-though-florida-just-killed-such-a-bill-8263639>