



## RESEARCH BRIEF

**CONTACT:** Elliot Imse, Director of Communications, [elliot.imse@victoryfund.org](mailto:elliot.imse@victoryfund.org), 646.957.4740

### **2018 Rainbow Wave by the Numbers: Historic Number of Gubernatorial, Congressional Nominees** *LGBTQ Victory Fund Data from Last Five Election Cycles Shows Dramatic Spike in High-Level LGBTQ Nominees; Number of LGBTQ Women Nominees*

An unprecedented number of LGBTQ people have run for office throughout the 2018 election cycle – unleashing the potential for a Rainbow Wave of new openly LGBTQ elected officials at every level of government come November. The increase in candidates running is particularly noticeable for Congressional and gubernatorial positions, when analyzing candidates over the last five election cycles. The number of LGBTQ women-identified nominees for Congress also rose dramatically.

These high-level candidates are among the more than **430** openly LGBTQ people who ran for office at every level of government this cycle. At least **244** openly LGBTQ candidates are still in the race and will appear on general election ballots in November. Of the **25** openly LGBTQ major party nominees for U.S. Congress and governor, all are Democrats.

In the research brief below, you will find the:

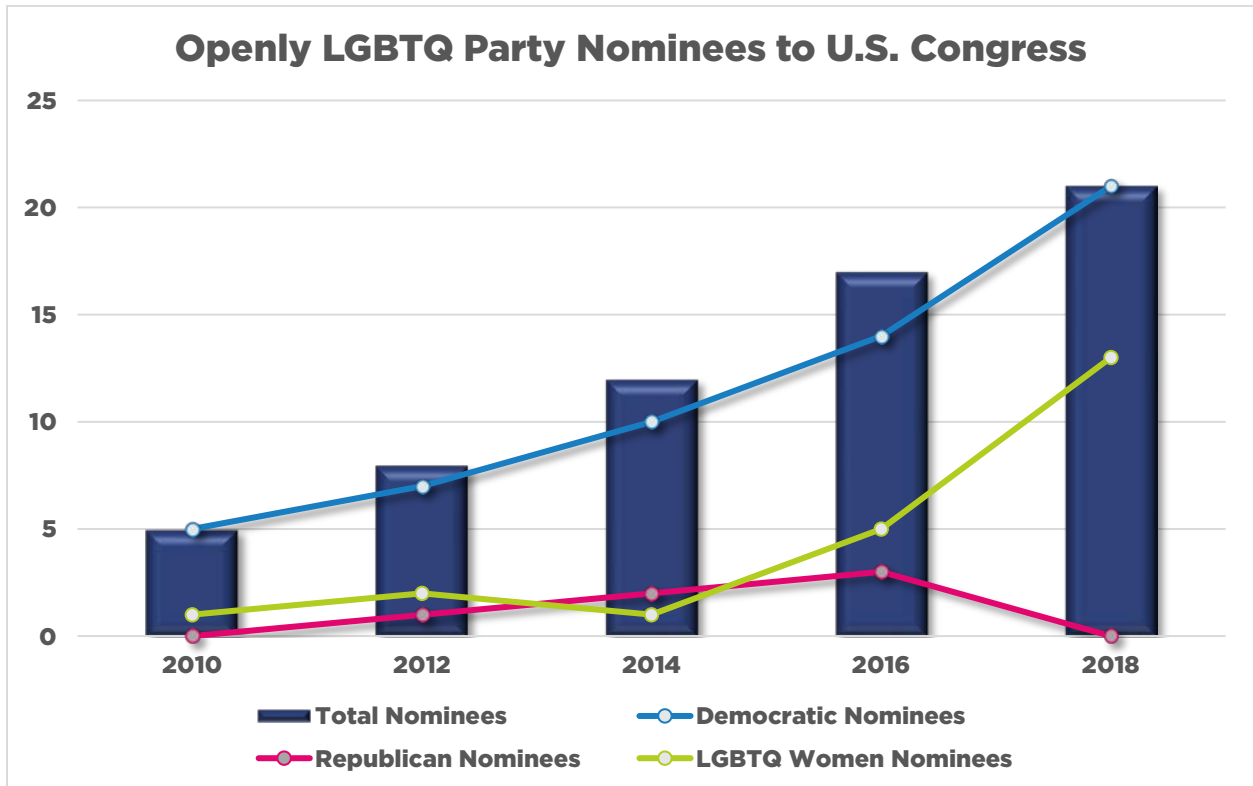
- Number of major party Congressional nominees over the last five cycles by political affiliation and gender;
- Number of gubernatorial candidates and nominees over the last five cycles; and a
- Statement on the Rainbow Wave from Mayor Annise Parker, President & CEO of Victory Fund.

#### **By the Numbers: LGBTQ Major Party Nominees for U.S. Congress**

**Twenty-one** openly LGBTQ candidates won Democratic primaries for U.S. Senate or U.S. House this year – more than at any other time in U.S. history. The unprecedented number of nominees marks a **24 percent increase** when compared to the 2016 election cycle and a **320 percent increase** since 2010. The number of LGBTQ women-identified nominees skyrocketed **160 percent** since 2016, the year which held the previous record. There are **13** LGBTQ women-identified Congressional nominees this year – outnumbering the number of men-identified nominees – including both U.S. Senate nominees who are women.

There are **zero** known LGBTQ Republican party nominees for U.S. Congress this election cycle, the first time since 2010 there are no openly LGBTQ Republican Congressional candidates on the general election ballot.

Currently Senator Tammy Baldwin is the only openly LGBTQ person ever elected to the U.S. Senate and there are six openly LGBTQ members of the U.S. House.



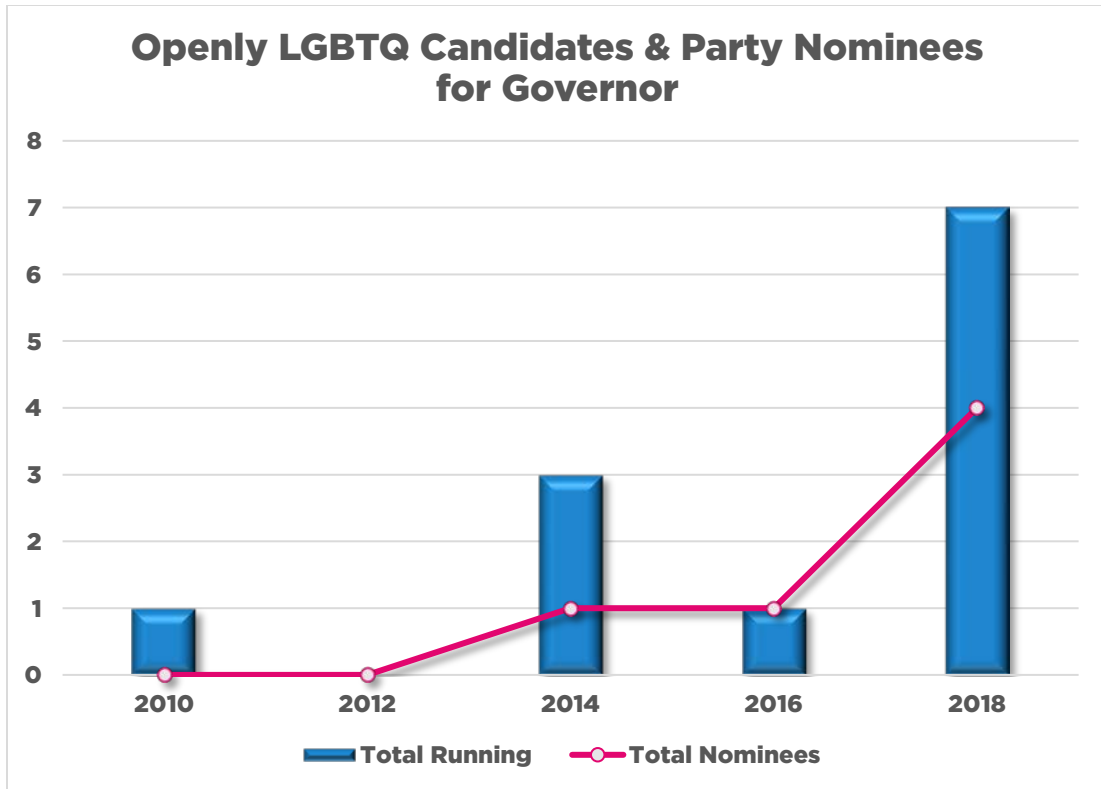
*A numerical chart of the number of nominees by cycle and a complete list of 2018 Congressional nominees are in addendum A.*

**By the Numbers: LGBTQ Gubernatorial Candidates**

A record **seven** known LGBTQ candidates ran for governor during the 2018 election cycle and **four** received a major party nomination – a historic high. Incredibly, the four **nominees represent the full LGBT acronym**, with one lesbian (Lupe Valdez of Texas), one gay man (Jared Polis of Colorado), one bisexual woman (Kate Brown of Oregon) and one transgender woman (Christine Hallquist of Vermont) to appear on the ballot in November.

Before this election cycle, **no more than three** openly LGBTQ people had ever run for governor in one election cycle and **never had more than one** openly LGBTQ person been nominated for the governor’s office by a major party. All gubernatorial nominees have been Democrats.

Governor Kate Brown is the only openly LGBTQ person ever elected governor in the United States.



*A numerical chart of the number of nominees by cycle is in addendum B.*

**Statement from Mayor Annise Parker on the Rainbow Wave**

Mayor Annise Parker, President & CEO of LGBTQ Victory Fund, released the following statement about this research brief:

“A wave of enthusiasm among Democratic primary voters for openly LGBTQ candidates has unleashed a Rainbow Wave that can transform the U.S. Congress and our governors’ mansions come November. It represents an evolution in American politics – with voters choosing out LGBTQ candidates as the solution to the divisiveness and dysfunction we see in Washington and in many of our state capitals. The struggles and experiences of LGBTQ candidates provide a unique perspective that makes them authentic, values-driven leaders, and it is resonating. LGBTQ candidates join women, people of color, immigrants and Muslims who are running this cycle to lead the change we demand to see in our politics.

“The dramatic spike in openly LGBTQ people running for the highest levels of government is thrilling but one-sided, with zero openly LGBTQ Republican Congressional or gubernatorial nominees. The anti-LGBTQ policies pursued by the White House and in extreme-right state legislatures has led to few openly LGBTQ people running in a Republican primary – and those who do are too often sidelined by homophobic or transphobic political forces. Instead of a Rainbow Wave that should be celebrated by all Americans who believe in the wisdom of a truly representative government, we have a historic moment that is almost entirely partisan. This story will not change until the party of Lincoln rejects the divisive rhetoric and policies too many of its leaders rely on.”

**Currently Serving Openly LGBTQ Elected Officials**

Currently **576** known LGBTQ elected officials are serving nationwide – just **0.1 percent** of all elected official positions. American must elect **22,810** more LGBTQ elected officials to achieve equitable representation in government. View all openly LGBTQ elected officials on LGBTQ Victory Institute’s [Out for America interactive map](#), or read its [Out for America report](#) from June 2018.

**ADDENDUM A: Openly LGBTQ Major Party Nominees for U.S. Congress**

	<b>Total Congressional Nominees</b>	<b>Democratic Congressional Nominees</b>	<b>Republican Congressional Nominees</b>	<b>LGBTQ Women Congressional Nominees</b>
<b>2010</b>	5	5	0	1
<b>2012</b>	8	7	1	2
<b>2014</b>	12	10	2	1
<b>2016</b>	17	14	3	5
<b>2018</b>	21	21	0	13

**Openly LGBTQ Nominees for U.S. Congress in 2018:**

<b>State</b>	<b>U.S. Senate Party Nominee</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
Arizona	Kyrsten Sinema	Democrat
Wisconsin	Tammy Baldwin	Democrat

<b>Congressional District</b>	<b>U.S. House Party Nominee</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
AZ-5	Joan Greene	Democrat
CA-25	Katie Hill	Democrat
CA-41	Mark Takano	Democrat
FL-18	Lauren Baer	Democrat
KS-3	Sharice Davids	Democrat
MN-2	Angie Craig	Democrat
MO-8	Kathy Ellis	Democrat
NH-1	Chris Pappas	Democrat
NY-18	Sean Maloney	Democrat
NY-23	Tracy Mitrano	Democrat
OH-15	Rick Neal	Democrat
OR-2	Jamie McLeod-Skinner	Democrat
RI-1	David Cicilline	Democrat
TX-23	Gina Ortiz Jones	Democrat
TX-27	Eric Holguin	Democrat
TX-3	Lorie Burch	Democrat

UT-1	Lee Castillo	Democrat
WI-1	Mark Pocan	Democrat
WI-7	Margaret Engebretson	Democrat

**ADDENDUM B: Openly LGBTQ Gubernatorial Candidates & Major Party Nominees**

	<b>Total Gubernatorial Candidates Running</b>	<b>Total Major Party Gubernatorial Nominees</b>
<b>2010</b>	1	0
<b>2012</b>	0	0
<b>2014</b>	3	1
<b>2016</b>	1	1
<b>2018</b>	7	4

*\*\*DISCLAIMER: The information and data provided above is accurate to the best of Victory Fund’s knowledge. It is possible other candidates or nominees are not accounted for because of a lack of media reports or other visibility.\*\**

---

**LGBTQ Victory Fund**

LGBTQ Victory Fund works to change the face and voice of America’s politics and achieve equality for LGBTQ Americans by increasing the number of openly LGBTQ elected officials at all levels of government.

[victoryfund.org](http://victoryfund.org)