

## ***Babette Josephs on LGBT Issues***

I have an extensive record of supporting and developing LGBT rights before and while serving as the Representative for the 182<sup>nd</sup> District of Pennsylvania. I have consistently opposed legislation that would inhibit the liberties of the LGBT community, while backing proposals that would expand LGBT rights. I support marriage for LGBT citizens, and I have also continuously partnered with local and national organizations that have an interest in LGBT issues.

### **Before Elected to Office Babette Josephs:**

- Became an original member of Pride of Philadelphia Election Committee (POPEC), which provided support for gay friendly candidates of any party; also a member of Liberty City Gay and Lesbian Democratic Club.
- Collaborated with Rita Addressa, founder and director of the Philadelphia Gay and Lesbian Taskforce, to change the negative image of gays and lesbians in the media.
- Appeared at many press conferences and issued supportive statements to reverse discrimination.
- Helped Giovanni's Room, a local book store, that a sitting Philadelphia Democratic State Representative was unjustifiably targeting as an outlet for pornography; supported an unjustly accused openly gay member of the Gershman Y.

### **1985 TO THE PRESENT**

**Legislative Initiatives:** *As a member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives and as the chair of the State Government Committee, Babette...*

- Secured \$2 million for HIV testing and preventive education in the 1988-89 Fiscal Year; the governor had asked for \$500,000.
- Authored all the language in the HIV Confidentiality of Records Act signed by the governor in 1990 along with the ACLU, the Philadelphia and Pennsylvania Health Departments and a wide spectrum of stakeholders during a time when HIV/AIDS was still stigmatized. Testified numerous times in support on continued anonymous testing.
- Single-handedly stopped the Senate version of a proposed constitutional amendment that would have prohibited same sex marriage and civil unions in Pennsylvania in 2006.
- Supported Hate Crimes legislation, although it was later struck down by the PA Supreme Court in 2007; cosponsor of replacement Hate Crimes bill.
- Reported H.B. 300, which guarantees LGBT rights statewide, out of the State Government Committee, which was the first and only time in the history of the Pennsylvania Legislature that a proposal affirming the rights of LGBT citizens had been sent to the floor by an official committee of General Assembly.
- Held State Government Committee hearings on House Bill 1400, predecessor bill to H.B. 300, which was the first and only time positive hearings on LGBT issues have ever been held in the Pennsylvania General Assembly.
- Protests anti-gay remarks made on the House floor.
- Works with PGN reporter Tim Cwiek to solve the 2002 case of Nizah Morris, a transgendered woman, who died under mysterious circumstances after accepting a ride from a police officer.

**Community Initiatives:** *As an advocate for the LGBT community, Babette...*

- Became active member of the local and national and state Women's Political Caucus, American Civil Liberties Union, and the National Organization of Women, all of which have made lesbian and gay rights a priority.
- Secured grants for a number of LGBT service and cultural non-profits, including the Anna Crusis Women's Choir and the William Way Gay and Lesbian Community Center; member of Gay Way and numerous other LGBT organizations.
- Helped the LGBT community become involved in local politics by encouraging Liberty City Democratic Gay and Lesbian Political Club members to run for seats in the Eighth Ward Executive Committee
- Worked with RAGE (Riders Against Gender Exclusion), to end SEPTA's practice of stamping passes with a F or M.
- Hired openly LGBT staff members to work in her office.
- Named Brian K. Sims Treasurer of 2010 Re-Elect Babette Josephs campaign.
- Provides grants to LGBT groups such as William Way Community Center, Equality Forum and AIDS Law Project.
- Submitted a Capital Budget Request for the Attic Youth Center in 2010.