



Congresswoman

VERONICA ESCOBAR

Texas' 16th Congressional District

December 2020

Congresswoman Escobar: An Ally in Congress for El Paso's LGBTQ+ Community

El Paso is blessed with a large and vibrant LGBTQ+ community. Since Congresswoman Veronica Escobar's (TX-16) first day in Congress, she has worked tirelessly to uplift them and for the extension of equal rights, the repeal of discriminatory laws, the elimination of hate-motivated violence, and the improved health and well-being for all regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression.

During the 116th Congress, Congresswoman Escobar [achieved a perfect score from the Human Rights Campaign \(HRC\)](#) and voted to advance critical pieces of legislation and advocated for policies that would greatly affect the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer El Pasoans, including:

- In May 2019, [Congresswoman Escobar voted for the Equality Act \(H.R.5\)](#) to ensure that all LGBTQ individuals are granted civil rights protections in the areas of employment, education, access to credit, jury service, federal funding, housing, and public accommodations.
- Introduced in July 2019, Congresswoman Escobar's *Homeland Security Improvement Act* (H.R.2203) includes a requirement for federal agents to complete sensitivity training towards LGBTQ individuals.
- In July 2019, Congresswoman Escobar [voted for the Speier Amendment](#) to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020. The Speier Amendment would have codified the military's existing equal employment opportunity policy to prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, religion, and sex (including sexual orientation and gender identity). This would end the ban on transgender military service.

She also sent a series of letters and joined in briefs to the Supreme Court on an array of issues that affect the LGBTQ+ community in Texas and across the country, including:

- Joined her colleagues in the Congressional LBGT Equality Caucus to [file an amicus brief on in Supreme Court on *Fulton v. City of Philadelphia*](#), an upcoming Supreme Court case that focuses on the issue of discrimination in the foster care and adoption system.
- [Co-led a letter](#) to former Secretary of Defense Mark Esper to address the Pride flag no longer being permitted for display on Department of Defense property under new flag guidance intended to ban the confederate flag.
- Sent letter to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services opposing the rollback to ACA protections that could harm LGBTQ+ community.
- Sent a letter to House Coronavirus Response Coordinator Ambassador Deborah Birx emphasizing the importance of the Trump administration making a clear public statement that discrimination of any kind will not be tolerated in the distribution of resources in response to the coronavirus pandemic.
- Sent a letter to the Department of Homeland Security requesting an investigation into LGBTQ+ asylum seekers forced to wait in Mexico under the Migrant Protection Protocols program.
- In October 2020, Congresswoman Escobar sent a letter to Governor Abbott and the Texas State Board of Social Work Examiners requesting the reversal of a recent rule change which allows Texas social workers to deny services to LGBTQ+ individuals or individuals with disabilities.

During the 116th Congress, Congresswoman Escobar voted to pass H.R. 3094, legislation that [designates the Pulse Nightclub as a National Memorial Site](#) and honors the 49 lives taken on June 12, 2016 during the tragic Orlando nightclub shooting.

Additionally, as a recognition of the contributions of El Paso's LGBTQ+ community, Congresswoman Escobar [celebrated Pride Month 2020](#) by spotlighting members of the LGBTQ+ and recognizing them for their work.

Visit escobar.house.gov to sign up to Congresswoman Escobar's newsletter and receive the latest updates from her office.