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**Houston LGBTQ+ Political Caucus Condemns Anti-Trans Attacks in House District 146  
Race from State Representative Shawn Thierry**

HOUSTON, TX – The Houston LGBTQ+ Political Caucus unequivocally condemns the anti-Trans and anti-LGBTQ+ attacks from State Representative Shawn Thierry during her House District 146 campaign. The attacks not only perpetuate dehumanizing stereotypes about the LGBTQ+ community, but they also incite unnecessary fear and violence against our community. While we stand firmly against Representative Thierry’s deplorable, anti-Trans rhetoric, we continue to uplift Lauren Ashley Simmons as our endorsed candidate for HD-146.

The representative has doubled down on anti-Trans rhetoric in a podcast that has stated that Simmons supports “genital mutilation” of children in the form of gender-affirming care. Bandit signs have been spotted in the district carrying the message, “no castration of Black boys,” “no sterilization of Black girls,” and “stopping the genocide of Black America,” as fear tactics directed to the public. This messaging has been repeated by the representative in the media, including on a recent podcast. These heinous allegations against Simmons are not only false and baseless, but extremely harmful with real-life, violent impacts for the Trans community.

Let us be clear: gender-affirming care is backed by every major medical association in the country. Gender-affirming care is **not** “genital mutilation,” but rather, encompasses a holistic spectrum of care to embrace the gender identity of Trans youth that ranges from utilizing a different name, changing their physical appearance to align with their gender identity, receiving therapy, or taking fully reversible puberty blockers. All gender-affirming treatment is made in close consultation by the youth’s parents and their doctor. It has been overwhelmingly deemed as both necessary and lifesaving for Trans youth.

As we stand against these attacks, we continue to get behind and back Lauren Ashley Simmons, The Caucus’ endorsed candidate for HD-146. Centering community and activism, Lauren is a champion for all people. A labor organizer, she continues to lobby and advocate for positive change that is inclusive and forward-thinking for all constituents within the district. She supports facts over myths and fearmongering, and will advocate in Austin for **all** constituents of the diverse district which she seeks to represent.

“This aggressive and incessant targeting is merely a reflection of blatant bigotry and hatred, as well as dangerous, misinformed ‘opinions’,” said Joëlle Espeut, an openly Trans board member of The Caucus. She continued, “It is important to condemn the representative’s vitriolic, anti-Trans rhetoric and to support a candidate that is for all people.”

We all must take a stand against bigotry, hatred, homophobia, and transphobia, and support the candidate that is truly for the people: Lauren Ashley Simmons.

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*The Houston LGBTQ+ Political Caucus is the South's oldest, civil rights organization dedicated solely to the advancement of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender equality. Founded in 1975, it is the largest LGBTQ+ political organization in the city of Houston and Harris County.*