

Jessica Cohen: Championing Inclusive Policies Through Strategic Leadership and Grassroots Advocacy in Austin Texas

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Austin, Texas Apr 21, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - With bulldog determination and a tenacity that refuses to let go, Jessica Cohen charges into every policy fight with unshakable focus and grit. A seasoned leader and trailblazing advocate in Texas politics, she continues to shape inclusive, equity-focused

policies across municipal, county, and state levels. With over two decades of public service and advocacy experience, Cohen stands at the forefront of efforts to foster community empowerment, protect LGBTQ+ rights, and expand progressive values throughout Texas. Her multifaceted contributions reflect a rare blend of policy expertise, technical acumen, and grassroots organizing.

Cohen currently holds multiple influential roles, each allowing her to create change from different points in the political ecosystem. She is the President of the Stonewall Democrats of Austin, a powerhouse organization advancing LGBTQ+ rights and political engagement. In this role, she works to uplift voices from across the LGBTQ+ spectrum, ensuring that the party's platform and policies reflect the lived realities of the community.

As Vice President of the Texas Democratic Party LGBTQ Caucus, Cohen helps shape state-level strategies to ensure representation and protections for LGBTQ+ Texans. Her leadership on the Texas State Democratic Executive Committee (SDEC) has positioned her as a guiding force for policy development and party governance. In these capacities, she doesn't just advocate for inclusivity—she architects it into the infrastructure of the party itself.

Cohen's civic involvement doesn't end at the state level. She is also actively engaged in local governance, serving as Chair of the Austin Board of Adjustment, where she plays a vital role in decisions around land use, zoning variances, and urban development. As an Ex-Officio member of the Austin Planning Commission, she provides insight and direction to long-term planning decisions impacting Austin's growth, affordability, and livability. Her comprehensive understanding of land use policy and sustainable development practices informs every decision she touches—advancing both equity and smart growth.

Moreover, Cohen serves as Democratic Precinct Chair for PCT 425 in Travis County, amplifying grassroots voices and organizing efforts at the neighborhood level. From block walks to policy forums, her precinct work ensures that everyday citizens have a direct line to the political process.

In each of these roles, Jessica Cohen embodies a powerful, inclusive leadership style centered on collaboration, transparency, and coalition-building. She is recognized for her ability to bring together people from vastly different backgrounds and political viewpoints to build consensus on difficult issues. This commitment was especially visible in recent months, during her statewide efforts to elevate the visibility of the transgender and broader LGBTQ+ communities within the Texas Democratic Party.

Earlier this year, Cohen was among the voting body that elected a new Texas Democratic Party Chair, a critical moment for the direction of the party. In the lead-up to that vote, she traveled across the state to attend all five TDP Chair candidate forums, personally engaging with candidates and local leaders. At each event, she raised vital questions about transgender rights, LGBTQ+ inclusion, and the future of progressive values in Texas. Her presence not only influenced the tone of the forums but also helped set the bar for inclusive leadership within the party.

On Transgender Day of Visibility, Cohen demonstrated her signature mix of care and advocacy by hand-delivering 500 cookies to staff members of the Central Texas House delegation and the Texas House LGBTQ Caucus—a heartfelt gesture of appreciation and solidarity. This act was emblematic of her approach to politics: personal, persistent, and people-first.

Cohen also made recent appearances at rallies and events supporting transgender rights and received recognition from several organizations for her advocacy efforts, with more details to be highlighted in future announcements.

Cohen's history of advocacy dates back well before her current leadership positions. In 2018, she ran for Austin City Council (District 3), with a campaign focused on affordability, land use, and opposing discriminatory policies such as the then-proposed anti-transgender bathroom bill. Her platform blended policy depth with lived experience, making her a strong contender in a competitive race. While she did not win that election, her campaign sparked important conversations about housing equity, LGBTQ+ representation, and responsible development in Austin.

Cohen also has a long track record of party service. She previously served as Vice President of the Austin Environmental Democrats and as Secretary of the Liberal Austin Democrats, broadening her advocacy to include environmental justice and economic equity. Her diverse leadership history reflects a consistent vision: building a more inclusive, sustainable, and equitable Texas.

Professionally, Jessica Cohen is a network security consultant with a specialization in finance and healthcare—two of the most critical and sensitive sectors in the digital age. Her work helps safeguard essential data and infrastructure, while her advocacy within the tech industry promotes gender diversity and the inclusion of women in STEM fields. She is especially passionate about creating pathways for women and LGBTQ+ individuals in cybersecurity, mentoring those who have traditionally been excluded from tech spaces.

Cohen's career began in service to others—literally. Before her foray into politics and tech, she was an EMT for 12 years, working on the front lines of emergency care. This chapter of her life underscores a lifelong dedication to public service and community wellbeing.

As a trans woman of over 25 years, Jessica's advocacy is rooted in lived experience. She brings not only policy expertise to the table but also a deep understanding of the everyday challenges faced by transgender individuals in Texas. Her testimony at the Texas Legislature has become a staple in the fight for civil rights, where her compelling voice continues to influence hearts, minds, and policy decisions.

In every role she holds—from city boards to state committees—Jessica Cohen grips firmly to her values like a bulldog: persistent, grounded, and unrelenting in the pursuit of justice.

About Jessica Cohen

Jessica Cohen is a strategic consultant, mediator, and facilitator with extensive experience in Texas politics, urban planning, and cybersecurity. She currently serves as President of the Stonewall Democrats of Austin and Vice President of the Texas Democratic Party LGBTQ Caucus. A member of the Texas State Democratic Executive Committee, Cohen also holds leadership positions in local government and the Democratic Party at the precinct level. She has been an advocate for LGBTQ+ rights for over two decades, bringing authenticity, resilience, and that unmistakable bulldog spirit to every initiative she leads.

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