

**Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, DC
2014 Questionnaire for D.C. Council Candidates**

PUBLIC HEALTH

1. Will you act to ensure that the District provides transgender-inclusive health insurance to all D.C. Government employees, to include coverage for sex affirmation surgery (also known as sex reassignment surgery)? [Note: this question has been overtaken by events since it was drafted at the start of 2014. Study the Mayor's executive action here: <http://tinyurl.com/kn2dzty>]

Yes, I support efforts to ensure that the District of Columbia provides transgender-inclusive health insurance to all D.C. Government employees.

2. Will you support budgets that target funds to address health disparities in the LGBT population, including in mental health and substance abuse treatment?

Yes, I support budgets that target funds to address health disparities in the LGBT population, including in mental health and substance abuse treatment.

3. Will you support reforming the medical marijuana law and regulations to delete the outdated list of qualifying conditions and rely instead on a physician's diagnosis of medical needs?

Yes. The government should not interfere with the physician-patient relationship. If the physician is properly licensed and fully discloses to the patient the possible complications that may arise from treatment, the patient should receive the medical treatment as recommended by the physician. The government may play some limited role in the time, place, and manner of treatment to minimize the exposure of children to marijuana.

4. Describe steps you will take to improve performance at the HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD, and TB Administration (HAHSTA), including in HIV prevention, HIV/AIDS surveillance, and mental health services.

Much progress has been made in recent years, but more work remains. I will ensure that proper oversight is conducted of grants. I will work to ensure that HAHSTA has the funding it needs to build upon the ongoing HIV/AIDS strategy.

JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

5. Will you press for increased oversight of the Metropolitan Police Department's gathering and analysis of crime statistics to ensure greater comprehensiveness and objectivity, including transgender-related hate crime data?

Yes. During my time as an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner, residents would, on occasion, raise questions about the manner in which crimes are recorded in the District of Columbia. A careful, ongoing review of (a) reporting methodology, (b) the officers' diligence in following reporting guidelines, and (c) a public explanation of reporting methods (more transparency) are essential. As Council Chairman, I will ensure that oversight of MPD is conducted. All potential evidence relating to potential hate crimes should be made readily available to oversight authorities for review once the investigation and any prosecution have been completed.

6. What will you do to provide alternatives to incarceration for marginalized and at-risk populations like homeless youth and transgender people who resort to sex work for survival?

I support alternatives to incarceration-- and in most cases, alternatives to prosecution --for at-risk populations who resort to sex work for survival. Prosecution and incarceration often do little more than re-victimize an individual who needs the support of the community. As Council Chairman, I will emphasize the need for such community support as transitional housing, job training, addiction recovery programs, and mental health services. My experience as an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner taught me that communication with the community is essential prior to the inception of newly established neighborhood-based services such as transitional housing.

7. Will you support funding to hire qualified trainers to provide LGBT-inclusive cultural competency training to all police officers, including in the handling of intimate partner violence?

Yes. Officers may not be familiar with specific issues within the D.C. LGBT community; greater cultural competency can only improve every officer's ability to perform his or her public safety duties. However, in order to make the most efficient use of public resources, if possible the trainer should be qualified to provide cultural competency concerning a wide variety of communities.

HUMAN RIGHTS

8. Will you insist that anyone appointed as Director of the Office of Human Rights be required to have professional training and experience in civil rights law enforcement?

Yes. As Council Chairman, I will only support a qualified OHR Director nominee who possesses the expertise to evaluate the work of the OHR and who can be trusted to not bypass reporting requirements.

9. Given the limited results from trans-inclusive Project Empowerment training, will you push to establish a project at the Department of Employment Services to increase government hiring from under-represented populations, including the chronically underemployed trans population?

I advocate pro-growth, pro-jobs policies that will reverse the unemployment status of all underemployed populations in the District, including the transgender population, returning citizens, and others who face systemic discrimination. I support job training programs and the vigorous enforcement of anti-discrimination laws. I support Mayor Gray's Project Empowerment pilot program and look forward to a full evaluation of the program to determine its success in combating unemployment in the transgender community.

YOUTH AND SENIORS

10. Will you support improved services and treatment for LGBT homeless youth and seniors, including transitional housing?

Homelessness is one of the most pressing issues facing the District of Columbia, and public funds should be directed at helping our most vulnerable residents. However, oversight of our homeless programs is also needed in order to ensure that government assistance reaches the intended beneficiaries. I will work to ensure that the dysfunction witnessed at D.C. General and other shelters ends.

Part of the solution lies in placing homeless youth and seniors in controlled environments across the District instead of housing them in large shelters. However, in order for the residential home option to be successful, effective engagement with the host community early is essential. The plan by the Latin American Youth Center (LAYC) in 2010/2011 to operate housing for 20 young homeless people in the former J.F. Cook school experienced strong community opposition in part because some residents believed that the LAYC had not fully listened to their concerns.

Combating discrimination against LGBT youth and seniors in the context of transitional housing will largely depend upon the new Mayor's diligence with ensuring that his administration follows District law, but the Council will also have an oversight role.

CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES

11. Will you support strengthening Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) reforms by eliminating license protests filed by citizens associations and ad hoc groups, requiring stakeholders to participate in the community process provided by the Advisory Neighborhood Commission?

I sympathize with the plight of any business that has been unfairly targeted for protests by citizen associations and ad hoc groups. However, based on my experience as an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner, citizen associations and ANC members often possess competing interests-- and personalities. It would not be appropriate to require that all citizen protests must be made through the ANCs,

particularly given that ANC action on any alcohol license is discretionary (thus, a citizen association with a legitimate concern could simply be ignored by an ANC).

However, GLAA points out that ANCs too often use licensing protests to impose special operating restrictions on licensees in a manner that “dilutes equitable regulatory application, arbitrarily diminishes license value, and inappropriately establishes barriers to fair business competition.” The ANCs are supposed to engage in advisory, rather than regulatory or legislative, actions. The D.C. Council should consider implementing further alcohol license protest reforms.

12. Will you defend the right of adults in the District to choose adult-oriented entertainment for themselves, and the right of appropriately licensed and zoned businesses to provide it?

Yes, I will defend the right of adults in the District to choose adult-oriented entertainment for themselves, and the right of appropriately licensed and zoned businesses to provide it. In general, adults should not be prevented from participating in legal, adult activities that do not harm other individuals. In addition, it’s a good business practice to work with the community and the city to determine appropriate locations and signage for adult establishments so that a peaceful co-existence can be maintained.

13. Your record is part of your rating. Please list any actions that you have taken that may help illustrate your record on behalf of gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.

I do not recall being asked to weigh in on LGBT issues when I served as Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner (ANC) in 2007-2009. However, when I ran for that ANC seat, I did have the strong support of GBLT neighbors, and a gay couple worked the polls on my behalf on election day. In 2009, I strongly supported Rachel Hoff in her election for Chair of the Young Republican National Federation.

My participation in the painfully slow process of moving the national Republican Party in the right direction continues to this day. In my present election campaign, I have publicly announced my support for marriage equality/freedom, and my hope that Congress will amend Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (the statute I enforced for ten years at the Department of Justice’s Civil Rights Division) to extend employment discrimination protections to LGBT individuals. As a candidate for Chairman of the Council, approximately 11% of contributors to my campaign have come from the LGBT community. On September 24, 2014, the D.C. chapter of the Log Cabin Republicans voted to endorse my election to the office of Council Chairman.

I am encouraged by the progress on LGBT issues that has been made by America over the past 45 years and will continue to push for more tolerance and diversity within the Republican Party.

Your answers should be typed on separate paper rather than on this form. *You must sign your name on each answer sheet to indicate your personal commitment to your answers.*

Please return your signed questionnaire responses by Thursday, September 11 to GLAA, P.O. Box 75265, Washington, D.C. 20013.

In addition to sending your signed hard copy, please email a copy (in any major word processor or text format) for loading on GLAA's website to equal@glaa.org. Thank you.