

**Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, DC  
2016 Questionnaire for D.C. Council Candidates**

Candidate: Jack Evans

**HOME RULE**

**1. Will you oppose congressionally imposed school vouchers, which have been shown not to improve students' academic achievement, and which often go to schools that operate outside the nondiscrimination provisions of the D.C. Human Rights Act?**

Yes, I oppose federally imposed vouchers. I sent a letter in October to House Oversight Chairman Jason Chaffetz opposing the vouchers and recently refused to join my colleagues on the Council in sending a letter to Congressional leaders asking for further support of school vouchers. I will continue to oppose congressional imposed school vouchers, work to improve our local public education system, and advocate for greater local control in all aspects of the District – education, budgets, parkland, etc.

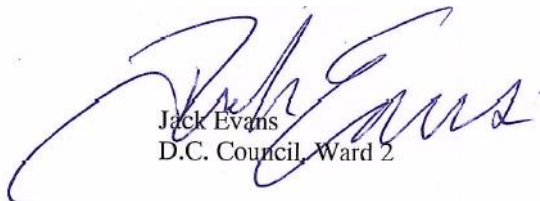
**HEALTH**

**2. Will you press the Department of Health to complete and issue the long-delayed LGBT Health Report, which is supposed to be issued annually?**

Yes. The District was one of the leading jurisdictions in the United States in providing HIV/AIDS services and has a strong history fighting to address LGBT health disparities through organizations like Whitman-Walker, Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance, and the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club, among others. The LGBT Health Report needs to be completed and issued immediately, so we can assess the disparities and shortcomings in our health care services for the LGBT community. We need to continue to push to make services and resources more accessible particularly east of the River where health disparities are still high, but resources are less accessible. We need to continue to work with communities all across the District to help and encourage health facilities that have the trust of the community to open in neighborhoods where they do not currently exist. I will encourage the Department of Health to complete this report quickly and to work with LGBT organizations such as The DC Center, the Office of LGBT Affairs, Whitman-Walker, and GLAA to get these reports done on time.

**3. Will you support budgets that target funds to address LGBT health disparities, including in mental health and substance abuse treatment, and mandate data collection on this population across all programs?**

Yes. I support the funding of LGBT health initiatives to properly address the unique needs of the community, including funding for mental health and substance abuse programs. I have co-sponsored legislation such as the "Conversion Therapy for Minors Prohibition Amendment Act" which helps

  
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protect minors from conversion "therapy" a practice proven to have caused depression and other mental health issues.

Since first joining the D.C. Council in the early 90s, I have made addressing LGBT health disparities a top priority. In 1994, I co-sponsored the HMAIDS Services Grant Making Authority, which has provided much needed funding to HIV/AIDS related services. In 1995, I introduced Emergency Legislation, the "Human Immunodeficiency Virus Transmission Prevention Amendment Act," to allow community based organizations to establish a clean needle exchange program.

As part of addressing the disparities that continue to exist, I would support funding for training of healthcare providers to refer patients to specialized testing if the need should arise. I also support the funding of LGBT health initiatives to properly address the unique needs of the community, including funding for mental health and substance abuse programs. I think that the elderly and other overlooked populations should be engaged to help with the education and prevention of HIV as well as other STDs. The elderly are particularly at risk; that is why I helped create the Senior HIV/AIDS Education and Outreach Program, which trains seniors to serve as peer educators and collaborates with the Department of Health to administer education and outreach programs.

#### **4. Will you support separating Emergency Medical Services from the Fire Department?**

Yes. I agree completely with GLAA "Building on Victory" brief that separating Emergency Medical Services from the Fire Department is important to allowing both of these agencies to focus on improving their performance. In addition to separating the agencies, I also believe strongly in increasing training for EMS personnel to develop a LGBT cultural competency.

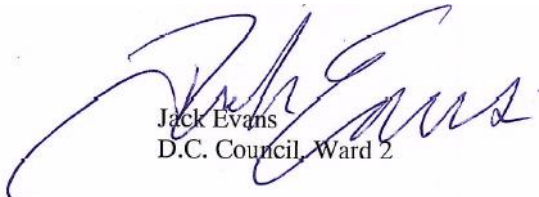
### **JUDICIARY**

#### **5. Will you support and press for passage of Bill 21-38, the Death with Dignity Act?**

Yes. I believe that the ability to choose to end one's life in a time of suffering or illness is a fundamental human right that the District of Columbia should lead on guaranteeing. I was with my wife Noel when she was suffering from cancer, which ultimately took her life in 2003. That was a painful personal time for my family and me, but I believe the medical decisions we needed to make during that time shouldn't have been dictated by the government. Likewise, I believe that individuals and families should have the right to make medical decisions for themselves, and if that includes the choice to end their life, the District should not interfere. I support the Death with Dignity Act and plan to vote on the legislation when it comes before the full Council.

#### **6. Will you press for the District to provide "Jobs Not Jails" by developing alternatives to incarceration for marginalized citizens who resort to sex work for survival?**

Yes. Having worked to make DC a place that does not discriminate against anyone and acts smartly to address the issues facing our city, I do not support arresting or criminalizing individuals who have

  
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turned or been forced into sex work for survival. These individuals are all too often engaged in this activity by force or under duress, and any efforts by the city to engage these individuals should be to provide health or other supportive services. We District should be working with non-profit partners to create more drop-in centers, transitional housing, job training, educational programs, counseling services, addiction recovery programs, and mental health services to support those that may be engaged in prostitution. From a safety standpoint, training and resources are necessary not only for the LGBTLU but for the wider force, as well. From a social services standpoint, we need training to ensure awareness and sensitivity by social services providers in the District. Inclusion in the DC Human Rights Act is pivotal.

**7. Will you support and press for passage of a reintroduced Bill 20-63, the Police Monitoring Enhancement Amendment Act, to give the Office of Police Complaints unfettered access to information and supporting documentation of the covered law enforcement agencies?**

Yes. I believe what has been lacking from ensuring this legislation is passed and greater information sharing is created between Office of Police Complaints and the covered law enforcement agencies is full engagement by the various stakeholders. I would encourage MPD (and other law enforcement agencies), the Office of Police Complaints, and community stakeholders to come together to ensure that we are collecting, sharing, and responding to public safety information and documentation in a consistent and citizen-first way.

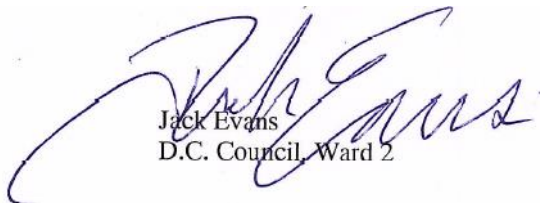
**YOUTH AND SENIORS**

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

Yes. Although it is estimated roughly 10% of the population identifies as LGBT, we know that this population accounts for over 30% of youth receiving homeless services. That is why I co-sponsored the "LGBTQ Homeless Youth Reform Act" to develop policies to reduce the rate of homelessness within this community.

Shelter staff should also receive sensitivity and diversity training to better serve the homeless LGBT population. Those identifying as LGBT in DCPS schools are three times more likely to run away or attempt suicide. We can prevent this. I acknowledge the unique needs of homeless LGBT youth and seniors and will continue to work with community partners to improve services, including expanding shelters, transitional housing, and permanent housing.

It is important for the city to continue to review, examine, and expand the priorities and needs of our aging population. From ensuring our city agencies, such as the DC Office on Aging, the Department of Health, the Department of Mental Health and others, continue to demonstrate thorough oversight and report on how they currently work with the LGBT senior community to pushing for thoughtful planning on how we will address future needs of our city's population, we can and should do more to support LGBT seniors. Beyond this oversight, I have been an advocate for increasing affordable and

  
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senior housing in the District through the Housing Production Trust Fund and property tax abatements for seniors. Additionally, the network of senior "villages" in the District have been a critical resource to help seniors stay in their homes and age in place. As always I am happy to work with the LGBT community to ensure all of our seniors are being given equal opportunities to age with dignity.

## **CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES**

### **9. 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 this right, and I will oppose any efforts to try to legislate "morality" against the right of business owners and citizens to choose adult-oriented entertainment for themselves. Specifically, I will oppose any attempt to abridge the nude dancing establishments.

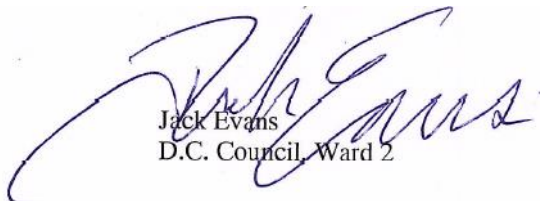
### **Your record is part of your rating. Please list any actions that you have taken that may help illustrate your record on behalf of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.**

It is my pleasure to respond to your 2016 candidates' questionnaire. I have always enjoyed working with GLAA and together we have made a tremendous difference in the lives of LGBT residents of the District of Columbia.

Among the issues I have championed:

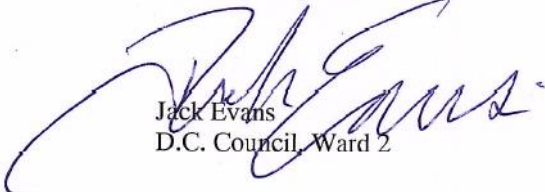
- Equal marriage rights for gay and lesbian couples;
- Reform of the District's sodomy laws;
- Creation and expansion of the domestic partnership program;
- HIV/AIDS -- condom availability, clean needle exchange, better funding and oversight, including audits, of the HIV/AIDS programs, confidentiality protections;
- Public Safety – creation of Gay and Lesbian liaison unit, sensitivity training, reestablishment of the Office of Police Complaints, numerous other efforts with MPD and FEMS, updating the criminal code;
- Human Rights – expansion of Human Rights Act to include gender expression and identity, funding for OHR activities and caseload;
- Honoring the LGBT Community – participation in community activities, celebrations, fundraisers, and the Pride Parade;

I have been proud to champion many issues of concern to the LGBT community. In seeking the endorsement from the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club recently (which I was honored to receive by unanimous acclimation), I referred to a flyer for my very first re-election campaign in 1992. The flyer was for an LGBT fundraiser organized to support my campaign and said "Jack Evans is more than supportive, he's *our* Advocate." I'm very proud to have had the opportunity to stand side-by-side with so many dedicated and committed activists over the years to make the District an equal and supportive

  
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place for the LGBT community. In short, I look forward to continuing to be the Advocate for the LGBT community on the Council.

Thank you for your consideration of my responses, and I would be happy to answer any questions you might have about my record or my campaign.



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