

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

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 non-discrimination provisions of the D.C. Human Rights Act?

Yes. Our first priority should be strengthening DC Public Schools. Furthermore, we must not tolerate discrimination of any kind in private schools. As a Councilmember, I will consult with leaders in the LGBT community to ascertain what additional legislation and enforcement measures are needed to close private schools that violate Human Rights.

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. In addition to private inquiries on the status of the LGBT Health Report, I will press my colleagues to hold regular public hearings, monthly if necessary to assure time issuance of the Report.

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. In addition, through the budget process and, if need be, additional legislation, I will take steps to assure the cultural competence of health providers who serve the LGBT community.

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

Yes. This year, DC lost the top medical professional in the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department. This loss is but a symptom of the lack of support for medical services in FEMS. Since I have no confidence that FEMS will give medical services the priority it deserves, I will introduce and support legislation to separate Emergency Medical Services from the Fire Department.

JUDICIARY

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

Yes. There are some in our community who have religious reservations about assisted suicide. Nevertheless, Government must not impose one group's religious views on others. I see the Death with Dignity Act as an important step for DC, and I will support its passage.

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. Public safety is a priority in my campaign, and I see job creation as an essential element in preventing crimes motivated by economic deprivation. However jobs alone are not sufficient support for those who turn to sex work. First, we must change criminal justice policy so we see sex workers as victims, not criminals. Then, we must provide all the support these victims need, including mental health and substance abuse counseling.

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. In addition, I will move to extend community oversight of police to include a say in the discipline of officers.

YOUTH AND SENIORS

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

Yes. Transitional housing and all government services must operate in ways that are culturally competent and welcoming to everyone in DC.

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. Furthermore, as the Ward 8 Councilmember, I will support efforts to welcome and place appropriately zoned and licensed adult-oriented entertainment businesses in our Ward.

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.

For much of my life, I have worked with young people — through formal programs such as coaching football and through informal relationships as well. I have consistently worked to assure that everyone is treated fairly and with respect, without regard to their sexual orientation.