

RESPONSES TO 2018 GLAA QUESTIONNAIRE FOR D.C. COUNCIL CANDIDATES

HOUSING

1. Will you encourage the Department of Human Services to conduct monitoring of singles shelters to ensure that LGBTQ applicants are admitted to a shelter that corresponds to their gender identity and do not face discrimination while residing there, as required by law?

Yes. I believe that all District residents facing homelessness should have access to safe and secure shelter. Individuals who identify as LGBTQ should have access to shelter beds affirming of gender identity, without discrimination based on sexual orientation. Through Council performance and budget oversight, I will hold the Department of Human Services accountable for ensuring LGBTQ applicants for shelter are provided short-term housing on a non-discriminatory basis that corresponds to the person's gender identity. If elected, I will hold the Department of Human Services, and all District agencies accountable for compliance with all anti-discrimination laws.

HEALTH

2. Will you press the Department of Health to work with a community advisory group and allocate necessary resources to ensure the annual completion and issuance of a trans-inclusive LGBT Health Report?

Yes, absolutely.

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

Yes, absolutely. The District's budget is an indication of our priorities, and we must prioritize the health needs of all of our residents – including our neighbors identifying as LGBTQ. It is imperative we increase the amount of funding to address disparities in health outcomes for our neighbors identifying as LGBTQ. When elected, I will be a strong advocate specifically for greater funding to address the mental health and substance abuse treatment needs of our LGBTQ youth. The Mayor has developed the LGBTQ community grant, which is an encouraging first step; however, we need to do more to improve the collection and use of data to increase the availability of targeted health and human services related services and supports for members of our LGBTQ community.

4. Will you support legislation to boost public awareness of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and postexposure prophylaxis (PEP) as options to prevent HIV infections through the distribution of information in health settings in accordance with Department of Health guidelines?

No. I fully support greater public awareness of preventive treatments for HIV. However, this is not a legislative issue. I will commit to leveraging the Council's budget authority to ensure the Department of Health receives an increase in funding to create and implement a public awareness campaign. We have multiple models to examine and learn from, such as New York City's #PlaySure and San Francisco's Getting to Zero. When evaluating other campaigns, we must consider how we can provide appropriate

resources that will allow for not only greater awareness, but also for increased options specifically in communities most at-risk of HIV infections. Research suggests Black and Latino men, and transgender women, are significantly less likely to know the benefits of PrEP and PEP, and our public awareness efforts must prioritize these communities.

JUDICIARY

5. Will you support Bill 22-0515, 'Reducing Criminalization to Improve Community Safety and Health Amendment Act of 2017', to improve community safety and health by removing criminal penalties for engaging in commercial sex?

No. I do not support Bill 22-0515, because it is likely to have the unintended effect of making it more difficult to protect sexually victimized and exploited trafficked minors (who are likely to have false or no identification), and make it more difficult to arrest and prosecute – to the fullest extent of the law – perpetrators exploiting trafficked minors.

6. What opportunities would you support through legislation to improve the lives of marginalized communities who engage in commercial sex work?

Please see my response to Question 5.

7. What opportunities would you support through legislation to improve the lives of marginalized citizens who resort to sex work for survival?

Please see my response to Question 5.

8. 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?

I would need to study this issue further and hear from critical stakeholders taking a position.

9. Will you support legislation to develop an avenue for sealing court-ordered name and/or gender/sex change process?

I would need to study this issue further and hear from critical stakeholders before taking a position. I remain open to legislation that addresses this important issue on a case-by-case basis.

HUMAN RIGHTS

10. While the unemployment rate in the District is 6.6%, approximately half of transgender people in DC report being unemployed. What steps will you take to address this persisting economic disparity in a timely and sustainable manner?

I am committed to ensuring all D.C. residents have access to greater economic opportunity as the District is rapidly changing, and many new opportunities continue to grow. However, too many residents are being left out, displaced, and not benefitting from the new found economic prosperity that exists – especially our more marginalized communities. As Councilmember, I would first convene a working group consisting of local businesses and community leaders to determine the greatest barriers facing our transgender community in the area of employment. I will be committed to advocating for the funding of policies and initiatives that increase workforce development opportunities for our transgender neighbors, while simultaneously supporting other initiatives focused on the LGBTQ community.

YOUTH

11. Will you support improved services and treatment for homeless LGBTQ youth, including transitional housing?

Yes, absolutely. I am so proud of the efforts of our community partners in supporting homeless LGBTQ youth. The work of organizations such as Casa Ruby, The Wanda Alston Foundation, and SMYAL is invaluable, but I would advocate for increased funding for these and other community partners to expand services and supports, including additional affirming transitional housing beds. Not only our LGBTQ youth more likely to need affirming transitional housing, they need to support in developing essential life skills and remaining on-track academically. I will support funding for efforts that expand services for homeless LGBTQ youth, and will work with the Mayor to facilitate increased collaboration between multiple District agencies to ensure our youth can be served and supported through multi-systemic, comprehensive and collaborative approaches.

SENIORS

12. Will you support improved services and treatment for LGBTQ seniors, including affirming senior housing?

Yes, absolutely. I am committed to improved services and supports, including affirming affordable housing, for our LGBTQ seniors. I believe this can be best accomplished by greater investments in preserving our existing public housing units (through improved maintenance and repairs), maximizing and preserving the number of rent-controlled and other affordable units, and the development new affordable housing units at 30% and 50% AMI through public subsidies and public-private partnerships. All new housing developments in Ward 1 receiving public benefits (such as discounted public land and tax incentives) should be held accountable for maximizing the number of affordable units. Through Council oversight, I will hold the District's housing and community development agencies accountable for maintaining and reporting out data on When developing housing units, we need to create intentional carve-outs that provide more opportunity to marginalized communities, including our LGBTQ seniors. I will also strongly advocate for the District's exercise of DOPA or eminent domain to take and convert vacant and/or blighted properties in Ward 1 to new mixed-income affordable housing communities.

13. LGBT seniors are more likely to age alone, and face higher levels of economic insecurity and discrimination than non-LGBT seniors. Will you support funding for congregate meals and other services that specifically aim to keep LGBT seniors engaged in the community?

Yes, absolutely. It is imperative that our aging LGBTQ neighbors not face isolation in our Ward1 communities. I fully support, and will strongly advocate for, transportation options, intergenerational opportunities, as well as congregate meals and other services that specifically support our seniors.

CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES

14. To fight the District's notorious 'pay-to-play' reputation, will you support enacting legislation that combines the best elements of Bills 22-8, 22-47, and 22-51?

Yes. During her 3 ½ tenure on the D.C. Council, the incumbent Ward 1 Councilmember has not established nor raised funds for a constituent services fund, to assist the Ward's most vulnerable residents with emergency needs (such as rental assistance, utility bills, child care etc.) or for community-building efforts. Every Councilmember is authorized to raise contributions – up to \$40,000 per year – for a transparent and accountable constituent services fund. Although Ward 1 has not had a constituent services fund at anytime during the incumbent Ward 1 Councilmember's 3 ½ years tenure, the incumbent did raise a reported \$200,000, during her second year in office, for her re-election campaign.

15. What steps will you take to ensure a transparent and equitable bidding process for city contracts?

Contracts awarded need to be done so in a way that promotes fairness and transparency. The bidding process needs to be realistically open to all interested parties, so all businesses have the opportunity to benefit from the rapid growth of our District. As Councilmember, I would take steps to: (1) evaluate our current bidding process to identify key areas that are preventing small, local businesses from being competitive in this process; (2) develop a review process that is both expedient and thorough, and includes the opportunity for public feedback; (3) sets criteria for all new contracts to include greater employment opportunities for District residents and any compliance with workforce training and hiring goals, particularly with respect to contracts benefitting Ward 1 residents.