



Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, DC 2020 Questionnaire for D.C. Council Candidates

GLAA Ethics Disclaimer:

GLAA believes that elected officials are stewards of the public trust and therefore must hold themselves accountable to the highest ethical standards. GLAA, therefore, will not issue any rating for candidates who, in their capacity as elected officials, were expelled from any elected post, or resigned, for ethics violations that include, but are not limited to, conflicts of interest, self-dealing, and malfeasance.

HEALTH

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

Yes. One clear example of the need for targeted assistance in this area is that over 40% of the homeless youth are LGBTQ.

LGBTQ individuals are more likely to suffer from mental health disorders and substance abuse issues.

To truly understand the scope of the issues and implement plans to address them, proper data collection and reporting are essential. As we take steps to improve, we need the data to indicate whether we're making a positive impact or must change our approach.

JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

2. Will you support Bill 23-435, the Tony Hunter and Bella Evangelista Panic Defense Prohibition Act of 2019?

Definitely. We should send a clear message that this mindset and potential use of the defense is unacceptable.

3. Will you support revision of the DC Riot Statute, Section 22-1322 of the District's penal code, to correct its overly broad language that allows abuse of prosecutorial discretion against individuals who exercise their First Amendment rights?

Yes. Broad prosecutorial discretion has long been established to disproportionately target marginalized communities. Even when charges are not pursued, there are still financial, emotional, and career consequences.

It's been shown that we can't simply rely on prosecutors always acting in good faith and need to account for the demonstrated reality.

HUMAN RIGHTS

4. Will you support a Gender Equity and Neutrality in the Official Code Amendment Act to update the D.C. Official Code as necessary to ensure that outdated terms are removed or replaced as well as to utilize language inclusive of the gender diversity of our population?

Yes. This is a simple and necessary change that goes a long way in demonstrating inclusiveness. It is long overdue.

5. Will you support Bill 23-0318, Community Safety and Health Amendment Act of 2019, to decriminalize consensual sex work for people 18 or older and create a task force to monitor the implementation and effects of the act?

Absolutely. It's clear the policies of the past have not and will not work. We should not be controlling what consenting adults do with their bodies.

The criminalization of sex work is also a distraction from what we should truly be focused on, tackling coercion, trafficking, violence and getting people the help they need. Too often police work has focused on arresting sex workers rather than conducting the deep investigations necessary to tackle abusers and traffickers.

6. Will you support increased funding for LGBTQ budget priorities, including fully funding the Office of Human Rights and establishing a new competitive community development grant program in the Office of LGBTQ Affairs?

I support fully funding the Office of Human Rights to ensure we're able to adequately investigate and enforce existing regulations and requirements. I'd like to see more details on the community development grant program before making a commitment, particularly given the incoming budget crisis.

7. Will you support a study of employment of transgender individuals in the government of the District of Columbia as a first step to creating a truly inclusive workplace and the implementation of transgender employment initiatives?

Definitely. To address existing (and demonstrated in many studies) inequities, we need the information to identify solutions.

YOUTH

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

Yes. It's particularly appalling how many of our youth are homeless due to rejection from their families and we should do what is necessary to support them.

Like my support for LGBTQ focused senior housing, we should have LGBTQ focused youth housing for this. I strongly believe that, especially for youth, having an inclusive community of others facing similar challenges is helpful for emotional well-being and future success.

SENIORS

9. Will you support improved services and treatment for LGBTQ seniors, including affirming senior housing and tenant based rental assistance and the Care for LGBTQ Seniors and Seniors with HIV Amendment Act of 2019?

Yes. While society as a whole has come a long way in LGBTQ support (though there's still much further to go), it's clear there are still significant issues with stigma and discrimination in senior housing.

While it would likely be inappropriate for the government to develop LGBTQ only housing, we should have LGBTQ focused senior housing where we ensure all are welcome (as we work to ensure all are welcome everywhere).

HOME RULE

10. Will you oppose Trump administration efforts to nullify the legal identities of transgender individuals, such as by assigning a person's gender based on their "original" birth certificate?

Yes. These are hateful efforts and must be opposed.

Please give more than a simple "yes" or "no" response to our questions — though you should begin with a "yes" or "no." The depth and completeness of your answers play a major role in determining your final rating.

Your record is part of your rating. Please list any actions that you have taken that may help illustrate your record on behalf of LGBTQ people. Feel free to attach relevant documents such as letters to the editor, legislative testimony, campaign literature, etc.

Please return your questionnaire responses by Friday, April 17 via email, preferably as an attachment in PDF format (for loading on GLAA's website), to equal@glaa.org. Thank you.