

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 - I am a Masters level Social Worker and for over 23 years, I have worked to improve the provision of public health care inclusive of physical, behavioral, substance abuse treatment and other wrap-around services to LGBTQ individuals in the District of Columbia. I worked at the DC Department of Health Care Finance in the Office of the Health Care Ombudsman where I fought as an advocate to obtain adequate program funding and quality health care services for LGBTQ and all other District of Columbia residents who suffer from health disparities.

JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

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

Yes – I support Bill 23-435 and the Panic Defense Prohibition Act of 2019. I am familiar with the Tony Hunter and Bella Evangelista cases and agree that a victim's sexual orientation, gender identity or other characteristics should never be used and barred as grounds for a legal defense.

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 – I will support revision of the DC Riot Statute, Section 22-1322 in collaboration with GLAA and the DC Office of the Attorney General to ensure that vague language is addressed to prevent unlawful prosecution of individuals who exercise their First Amendment rights as long as those individuals are not endangering others.

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Equity and Neutrality in the Official Code Amendment Act to update the D.C. Official Code as necessary to ensure that outdated terms are removed or replaced as well as to utilize language inclusive of the gender diversity of our population?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 – I believe that the District of Columbia Code of Municipal Regulation should be updated to utilize language inclusive of gender diversity. As a Social Work professional, or tenets are that all individuals must be treated with dignity, inclusion and with cultural sensitivity.

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?

No – As, a professional who is charged with protecting the public, I do not have enough information to support the decriminalization of consensual sex work for fear of human trafficking and the abuse of individuals who are forced and/or being manipulated to participate in sex work against their will.

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?

Yes- I believe that the current LGBTQ, Office of Human Rights' budget priorities only scratch the surface of issues effecting the LGBTQ community and that there must be an expansion of funding, housing and holistic wrap-around services targeted toward homeless members of this community who require supports to protect them from discrimination, disenfranchisement and abuse.

I have worked extensively as a Social Work professional to advance issues affecting our LGBTQ community in the District of Columbia. I have personally reached out to the DC Office of LGBTQ Affairs, the Human Rights Campaign and groups such as Casa Ruby located in Ward 4, to organize continuing education training on LGBTQ issues for my local Social Work colleagues. I also, support the expansion of funding for continuing education training for all District government health, human services and legal personnel who serve our LGBTQ population.

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?

Yes- Only when the confidentiality of study participant's identities and the confidentiality of the government agencies are never revealed to their employers in order to protect all participants from potential retaliation for speaking out about potential human rights violations within their workplace. It would also be required that this study be implemented in a fashion where mandatory cultural competency training is required for all District government employees in order to ensure workplace inclusion and sensitivity to issues effecting transgender employees.

YOUTH

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

Yes – Sasha Bruce, SMYAL and all other non-profit and government programs serving LGBTQ youth require more support for their services in tandem with extended transitional housing and I will be a staunch advocate in protecting our vulnerable LGBTQ youth population.

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- I have professionally worked with and participated in meetings to advocate on behalf of LGBTQ individuals to obtain healthcare and specialized HIV pharmacy services through Medicaid who would otherwise have not been able to pay for critical health care services or their medications. I unequivocally support health care, housing/rental assistance and the Care for LGBTQ Seniors with HIV Amendment Act of 2019.

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 - I oppose the present administration's efforts to nullify the legal identities of transgender individuals and I have personally worked in a professional capacity with aiding individuals with updating legal documents that reflected their transgender identity.

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.

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