

Marya Pickering

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?

One of the reasons I am running for the D.C. Council At-Large position is because a corrupt, one-party monopoly has not served the best interests of all our citizens. We need to commit to actions that will benefit everyone's health and quality of life. Our City Government already has many agencies who claim to be supportive of specific citizen groups, yet you accurately point out that there are disparities in equally treating health issues in the LGBTQ community. As your Councilmember, I would advocate for adequate oversight and prudent management of taxpayer dollars to serve all our citizens.

JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

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

No. I concur with the National Association of Defense Lawyers (NACDL) position that, while this Bill is well intentioned, it would be ineffective in addressing the rising tide of violence and will not function as its authors intend in the prosecution of hate crimes.

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?

No. I strongly support our First Amendment rights. However, there is a difference between peacefully exercising those rights and rioting, which according to the statute definition, "creates grave danger of damage or injury to property or persons."

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Equity and Neutrality in the Official Code Amendment Act to update the D.C. Official Code as necessary to ensure that outdated terms are removed or replaced as well as to utilize language inclusive of the gender diversity of our population?

The Constitution and Bill of Rights guarantee equality of all citizens before the law. Our local statutes should reflect existing Constitutional rights.

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. I concur with the testimony of the Family Research Council that this bill is a misguided attempt to help some of the most marginalized members of society, and will only hurt the people it intends to help. Our laws must not enable the sexual exploitation business in any way. Instead, we need to establish laws that recognize the inherent human dignity of every person.

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?

In my reply to Question 1. above, I said that we need to carefully evaluate our budget priorities to address the needs of all citizens. As your Councilmember, I would advocate for adequate oversight and prudent management of taxpayer dollars to best serve all our citizens.

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?

Your suggestion that the government of the District of Columbia does not provide "a truly inclusive workplace" is further evidence of the blatant failure of a corrupt, one-party monopoly to adequately provide for all citizens. My campaign motto is "No More Business as Usual." My background as an entrepreneur, small business manager, and government contract specialist well qualifies me to address the concerns of all D.C. residents in striving for a fair and inclusive work environment.

YOUTH

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

Our homeless population is further witness to the failure of the policies of a corrupt one-party monopoly to provide for the neediest among us. The Mayor's 2020 budget includes \$37 million for initiatives to end homelessness. Where is this money going? We need to leverage city resources with those of faith-based and community organizations like Miriam's Kitchen and Friendship Place to end homelessness in the city.

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?

As a Senior myself, I appreciate the challenges many of our fellow citizens face. One of the reasons I am running for the At-Large position is to restore sensible thinking about our priorities as a community to local government. As your Councilmember, I would advocate for adequate oversight and prudent management of taxpayer dollars to serve all our citizens.

Two specific things we can do for all seniors are: (1) change our laws so that the District is competitive with neighboring jurisdictions in allowing seniors to keep more of their hard-earned pension income; and (2) remove the Adjusted Gross Income cap required for real estate tax breaks for those who continue to live, work, and support businesses in the District.

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?

Not certain what this question has to do with "Home Rule.

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