



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, equitable access to quality health care across DC is critical, and especially for vulnerable populations. Forty percent (40%) of homeless youth in DC is LGBTQ, and most do not have convenient access to health care resources.

We need accurate data in order to define the most appropriate, impactful, and culturally-sensitive health care policies.

JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

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

Yes, the Bill is important for protecting our LGBTQ community from assailants who attack based on someone's sexual orientation, gender identity, or other characteristics.

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?

It is critical that we protect our First Amendment rights.

In reviewing the Section 22-1322, the following **highlighted** portions below may be interpreted as broad:



(a) A riot in the District of Columbia is a public disturbance involving an assemblage of 5 or more persons which by tumultuous and violent conduct **or the threat thereof** creates grave danger of damage or injury to property or persons.

(b) **Whoever willfully** engages in a riot in the District of Columbia shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than 180 days or a fine of not more than the amount set forth in § 22-3571.01, or both.

(c) **Whoever willfully incites or urges** other persons to engage in a riot shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than 180 days or a fine of not more than the amount set forth in § 22-3571.01, or both.

(d) If in the course and as a result of a riot a person suffers serious bodily harm or there is property damage in excess of \$5,000, **every person who willfully incited or urged others** to engage in the riot shall be punished by imprisonment for not more than 10 years or a fine of not more than the amount set forth in § 22-3571.01, or both.

Additional portions may also be interpreted as broad. To change the language, there needs to be a strategic discussion on the bill's intent and goal, work to identify the most accurate language with the accurate connotations (without leading to unintended consequences), compare against the current language, and revise as appropriate.

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, inclusive language can be powerful. The use of inclusive language of our gender diversity can signal an openness and willingness to interact and learn from individuals of all social identities. DC has the opportunity to lead by example. It is time we replace outdated terms.

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?

Yes, I support the decriminalization of consensual sex work for individuals 18 or older. The intent of the Act is to ensure safety for our sex workers, one of our community's most vulnerable populations, now. The long-term goals need to be focused on a holistic approach and allocating appropriate funding for resources to support our most vulnerable populations. Some of our sex work community identifies as transgender individuals. In my past public health work, I supported a community-based condom distribution program and accompanied sex workers to the hospital for STD testing. I witnessed firsthand the discrimination our sex workers, especially those who



identify as transgender, face. Unfortunately, today's data shows that our transgender community has difficulty finding employment, especially employment opportunities paying above the minimum wage.

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 equitable funding to meet the critical needs of the LGBTQ community. Prior to allocating appropriate funding to the Office of Human Rights, it is important to first review the Office's responsibilities and processes, and identify where there may be gaps. There needs to be a strategic discussion on the competitive community development grant, a feasible implementation plan with dedicated business owners, assigned staff to manage the program on an ongoing basis, and a comprehensive checks and balance system prior to moving forward.

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, as long as the study is conducted with sensitivity (details the methodology), accurately captures the data, and discusses any study assumptions and limitations. It's important for any study to present solutions that address the root issues, or else the policies created based on the study may lead to unintended consequences. For this to be meaningful, the study needs to provide accurate insights that can lead to positive and effective impacts for creating an inclusive workplace for transgender individuals.

YOUTH

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

Yes, forty percent (40%) of homeless youth in DC is LGBTQ. LGBTQ youth experience higher rates of bullying in schools, and higher rates of substance abuse, self-harm, and mental health concerns. We need a holistic, public health approach to provide critical services, treatment, and housing for our homeless LGBTQ youth.

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. According to a report from the Center for American Progress:

“LGBTQ senior citizens face higher rates of social isolation than the general elderly population. They also face higher rates of economic insecurity than the general population, particularly senior lesbian couples and older LGBTQ people of color.”

Source: <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbtq-rights/reports/2017/08/25/437280/advancing-lgbtq-equality-local-executive-action/>

Access to nutritious food, secure housing, and health information and care for the LGBTQ community and individuals with HIV is critical. Individuals may often not seek out resources because of the discrimination they face.

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. It is a human right for every individual to identify as the identity they choose.

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.