

## Responses to Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington 2020 Questionnaire for DC Council Candidates – Peter Bolton (Ward 2 City Council, DC Statehood Green Party)

### 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. However, I believe that this cannot be adequately done under the US's current private insurance model. That's why my platform includes a commitment to setting up a single-payer/Medicare-for-all-type system at the local level here in DC.*

### JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

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

*Absolutely and I find it deeply depressing that such a law is even needed. The fact that nonsense such as the so-called 'gay panic defense' can be used to successfully undermine the course of justice in criminal cases is, in my view, completely outrageous and I support any effort to counter these kinds of legal tactics.*

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 am a fierce opponent of right-wing attempts to use the judicial system to suppress the right to protest and the right to free speech more broadly. There should be no prosecutorial discretion whatsoever when it comes to First Amendment rights.*

### 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Equity and Neutrality in the Official Code Amendment Act to update the D.C. Official Code as necessary to ensure that outdated terms are removed or replaced as well as to utilize language inclusive of the gender diversity of our population?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 welcome any such move to update the language in contained within public documents and would work on the Council to extend this process well beyond any specific statute or code.*

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 strongly support this policy. In addition to supporting decriminalizing consensual sex work I also support the decriminalization of all controlled substances in the same way that the southern European nation of Portugal recently did – with very encouraging results. On both counts, I believe that criminalization is ineffective as well as morally indefensible. I believe that the approach to these and many other issues that are currently dealt with by law enforcement and the criminal justice system should be treated instead as public health problems that require public health solutions such as harm reduction and investment in public services for those effected.*

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 support increasing funding for this. However, again, I believe the only way to fully serve the needs of the LGBTQI+ community is to establish a fully public universal system of healthcare delivery. Without this, I am concerned that increasing budget priorities would be largely cosmetic – though of course I would support it as something that's better than nothing.*

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, I am deeply concerned about the level of discrimination that transgender individuals face in the workplace and their overrepresentation in sex work. This study is definitely needed but, as you say, it is only a "first step." Much greater action will be needed that a study to address the issue of anti-transgender discrimination in employment.*

#### YOUTH

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

*Not only would I support improved services and treatment for homeless LGBTQ youth, my platform includes a commitment to fighting on the Council for a the formation of a taskforce to end homelessness entirely by 2025. This would include the creation of a program funded at the city level to help transition homeless individuals and families into secure, permanent accommodation along with job training programs for formerly homeless individuals.*

#### 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 LGBT Seniors and Senior with HIV Amendment Act of 2019?

*Yes and increased funding for seniors generally is a central pillar of my platform. I pledge to fight for a city-based supplemental seniors' fund to supplement the (often woefully insufficient) social security payments received by seniors.*

#### 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 and I find it absurd that, on the one hand, Republicans are always going on about "state's rights" and the purported tendency for large cities to "impose their liberal values on the rest of America" yet here we have a classic case of the federal government, led by a Republican president, attempting to dictate to local jurisdictions how they should do things. This is a matter for individual states and localities to decide and DC has already made its mind up that people should be able to identify with their actual gender identity rather than what their birth certificate happens to say.*

Signed,