

**Leave No One Behind**

**2022 GLAA Questionnaire**

*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 link relevant documents such as letters to the editor, legislative testimony, campaign literature, etc.*

**Housing**

* Do you support providing sufficient affordable housing units for all households earning less than 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI), such as, allocating vacant apartments to very low-income households, ensuring sufficient funds for the Housing Production Trust Fund are dedicated to these renters, and strengthening inclusionary zoning laws?

I support finding creative ways to expand access to affordable housing for all Washingtonians in need. This includes strengthening inclusionary zoning laws and utilizing vacant apartments for temporary housing. While the OAG does not have direct control over the Housing Production Trust Fund, as Attorney General I will be a steadfast advocate for low and very low-income families, and support the dedication of sufficient funds for these families. Additionally, I will continue my efforts to fight discrimination in housing. Early in my career, I led a team of lawyers fighting for Black residents of public housing. As a result, I obtained increased funding to improve public housing conditions and to allow thousands of Black residents to move out of public housing and into a neighborhood of their choice. I also fought and obtained compensation for Black, Asian, and Latino residents of Columbia Heights who had been pushed out of their housing by developers and the District under the guise of “housing code enforcement,” but in reality to make room for high-end condos and apartments. As Attorney General, I will fight efforts of slumlords to drive low-income tenants out of the city by keeping their buildings in squalid condition. I will enforce promises developers make to create affordable housing in exchange for receiving City money, and use zoning laws to increase the supply of affordable housing. I will partner with nonprofits and tenants’ rights groups to uncover and take action against abusive landlords who deprive tenants of their TOPA and other rights. I will fight housing discrimination, including more subtle methods of rejecting tenants on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, marital status or source of income. And I will advocate for real solutions for those experiencing homelessness, such as offering housing subsidies and service intervention outreach.

* Do you support improving access to housing voucher programs by increasing the number available, as advocated for by The Way Home Campaign and LGBTQ+ Budget Coalition, and reforming program eligibility rules?

Yes, I support housing voucher programs as a means of reducing homelessness, and providing stability for residents on the path to economic independence. I will also advocate for proven solutions homelessness, including supporting voucher programs, housing subsidies, and service intervention outreach. Please see my answer to question #1 for more detail.

**Workers’ Rights**

* Do you support enacting legislation decriminalizing sex work for adults, including the selling and purchasing of sex and third party involvement not involving fraud, violence or coercion?

Yes, I would support decriminalization of sex work for the seller, assuming there are sufficient regulations of the activity to minimize health risks and risks of exploitation. The extent of decriminalization for the buyer that I would support would need to ensure we have effective tools to prevent human trafficking. I also categorically exclude from the definition of “seller” people or entities that are really brokers, i.e., pimps. This dynamic presents a large risk of allowing abuse and trafficking of sex workers, and I will seek to protect these workers from mistreatment and exploitation.

* Do you support repealing the subminimum wage for tipped workers?

Yes. I support Initiative 82 and the effort to ensure a livable minimum wage for all Washingtonians. I have represented labor unions. As someone who for decades has fought abuses by companies as a plaintiffs’ class action lawyer and civil rights lawyer, I will also be able to effectively take on unscrupulous businesses who try to avoid paying fair and lawful wages, overtime, and/or health and other benefits to their employees.

* Do you support funding the Office of Human Rights (OHR) at a level that ensures the agency ends its case backlog, completes discrimination cases in a timely manner, and effectively engages in community education and outreach?

Yes. I support funding the OHR at a level that ensures cases are dealt with carefully and efficiently, and is able to engage and inform the community about its functions. The OHR however is under the jurisdiction of the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice, rather than the OAG. As Attorney General I won’t have direct jurisdiction over the OHR, however I will seek to have a productive relationship with the Office of the Mayor, to ensure coordination and efficiency with the goal of serving all Washingtonians.

The OAG does have a Civil Rights Section, which enforces the DC Human Rights Act, one of the strongest civil rights laws in the country. As a civil rights lawyers with decades of experience enforcing civil rights laws, including the DCHRA, I will vigorously and effectively fight discrimination in housing and other areas.

**Health**

* Do you support establishing overdose prevention facilities in the District to reduce deaths from drug overdoses?

Yes. Services like these, coupled with DC’s safe needle exchange sites, and an increase in resources for addiction and mental health services will help reduce the number of deaths from overdoses.

* Do you support removing the criminal penalties for drug possession for personal use and increasing investments in health services?

Yes. I support removing criminal penalties for drug possession for personal use. Such cases are disproportionately brought against and contribute to the wide-spread incarceration of people of color. I support increased investments in health services, especially for mental health, including substance abuse counseling. This includes the expansion of mental health units that can respond to behavioral health crises, and increasing access to mental health treatment as a means to prevent crimes fueled by substance abuse or mental illness. Finally, we need to disrupt the school to prison pipeline that so often targets young people of color. Many times, disciplinary problems stem from undiagnosed disabilities, such as ADHD. I would seek to partner with our educators to make sure that in such cases, kids with disabilities are appropriately diagnosed and getting their disability supported and accommodated.

**Policing and incarceration**

* Do you support reducing D.C.’s total pre-COVID-19 incarcerated population by one-third to one-half by FY30?

Yes. I support the goal of reducing the jail population by at least half. D.C. reduced its jail population by almost a third during the pandemic, which demonstrates the dramatic over-use of incarceration prior to the pandemic. But, in one sense, a specific numerical goal for reduction of the incarceration rate is arbitrary. We know it should be much less. By partnering with other agencies and working with the Council and Mayor to increased access to and funding of social services – especially in communities with high crime rates – we can reduce rates of crime and incarceration beyond what may now seem possible. I also support the task force’s recommendations of prioritizing release of people with physical health issues, single parents with custody of minor children, elders, and people who pose no risk of violence to the community.

* Do you support better oversight, transparency, and accountability in the process of investigating and improving D.C. jails, including establishing an independent oversight body, addressing issues impacting transgender individuals, repairing jails, and changing staff culture?

Yes. I support better oversight, transparency and accountability across our criminal justice system. DC’s jail should have robust oversight to ensure it is complying with the law, including court orders. It is critical that DC Jails protect the safety and well-being of transgender individuals. An independent oversight body should help ensure that the Department of Corrections is complying with a recent consent order requiring that transgender inmates be housed according to their gender identity. As AG, I would certainly view it as a critical part of my responsibility to ensure that the DC Jail is complying with these requirements, as well as other measures to ensure transgender individuals are treated with respect and kept safe. We also need to improve oversight and fix the appalling and unconstitutional conditions at the DC Jail

* Do you support divesting from the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) to further invest in vital programs, including anti-poverty, violence prevention, crisis intervention, and reentry?

I strongly support investing in the vital programs listed above, but I do not believe that requires divesting from the MPD. We can fully fund both. If we address the root causes of crime, we will likely over time reduce the need to spend as much on policing. I believe in a holistic approach to combating rising crime in our city, including increased investment in violence prevention, crisis intervention and reentry. The DC Attorney General’s office has jurisdiction over juvenile crime prosecution and adult misdemeanors, and I will continue and expand programs that attempt to divert individuals from the criminal justice system while enforcing accountability for the most serious offenders. Too often, normal adolescent behavior is criminalized, particularly for Black and Brown youth, resulting in the so- called “school to prison” pipeline. I will work in partnership with other agencies to break that cycle. I will advocate for support and services for our youth that have a proven ability to prevent serious crimes in the first place, such as poverty reduction, substance abuse counseling, and mental health counseling.

I am a supporter of violence interruption programs, and believe they need to be part of a comprehensive plan to eliminate violence that is currently lacking in the District. I will advocate for training and reform to the MPD, and take action against officers who abuse their power. I will also push for reforms, such as record expungement and re-entry support services, that make it easier for formerly incarcerated individuals to be productively integrated back into society once they have served their time. This is not only the right thing to do, but sensible crime prevention policy, as individuals who can find a job or receive public assistance are less likely to reoffend.

Finally, I will seek creative means to strengthen gun safety laws even within the current environment in which the Supreme Court has taken an overbroad view of the Second Amendment. The District is alone among the States in lack of control over

criminal law enforcement for adult felonies. This, along with increased oversight and investment must change as a means to implement comprehensive criminal justice reform in DC.

*Please return your questionnaire responses in PDF format* ***by 11:59pm ET on Friday, April 22*** [*here*](https://forms.gle/BY2LdSwFxyURMwRN8)*. If you have trouble submitting your response through the form, you can email it to equal@glaa.org. GLAA will rate each response at our meeting on April 26 at 7pm ET.*