



A Loving Community

2024 GLAA Questionnaire

The following questions are based on [A Loving Community: GLAA Policy Brief 2024](#). If you have questions about the issues raised in the questionnaire, please seek the brief for guidance and clarification.

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—particularly actions that relate to the topics in recent GLAA policy briefs. Feel free to link relevant documents such as letters to the editor, legislative testimony, campaign literature, etc. Assume that GLAA is unfamiliar with your record.

1. Fund Our Futures. Do you support addressing concentrated wealth in the District by raising revenue through taxing the most wealthy residents as the Just Recovery DC Coalition recommends in its Fair Tax proposal?

Yes, I support addressing concentrated wealth in the District and DC leaders must do more to eliminate the massive racial wealth gap. At this moment, I am also concerned about the revenue trends of the District and the simultaneous need to strengthen our safety net programs. I would like to pursue a balanced approach in how we balance our budget and raise revenue in responsible and sustainable ways.

- 2. Invest in harm reduction and overdose prevention services to save lives.** Do you support funding the evidence-based and patient-centered approach to reducing overdose deaths and supporting healing from substance use disorder in the form of allocating \$15 million from the \$80 million Opioid Settlement Fund to fund two 24/7 harm reduction centers, that would include a safe drug consumption component, mobile outreach vehicles, and drug checking services?

I am a strong supporter of addressing drug abuse as a public health crisis, and support safe reduction tactics like mobile services and needle exchanges, however I have concerns about the management, accountability and transparency of a 24 hour harm reduction center at this time. I believe all of our neighbors deserve access to quality and affordable care, regardless of their ailment and/or condition, and as Ward 7 Councilmember I would look forward to engaging around those who are addicted getting the services they need.

- 3. Increasing the pipeline of licensed mental health care workers.** Do you support addressing the District's lack of mental health providers by reducing the barriers to becoming a licensed social worker through ending the exam requirement for people who complete a Bachelor's or Master's degree in social work and funding programs such as the recently passed law creating a free Master of Social Work program?

Yes, I support addressing the District's lack of mental health services and will advocate increasing funding for programs that help expand the pipeline. However, I do not support ending the exam requirement because I believe state licensure requirements preserve the standards of the profession and the quality of services that patients experience. I recognize that there are concerns about the racial biases of the DC exam, but we need to do more research to understand why the exam is leading to disparate passage rates between White test takers and test takers of color before we get rid of the exam in its entirety. We should also explore other pathways such as allowing social workers to work on provisional licenses underneath the supervision of licensed social workers, giving them time to study and retest.

- 4. Fund crisis response and community-based behavioral/mental health services to prevent crises.** Do you support investing in unarmed models of crisis response with responders that are culturally competent and resourced sufficiently to respond in minutes?

Yes, I support unarmed models of crisis response and community-based mental health. I have been a strong advocate for the full funding of the Neighborhood Engagement Achieves Results (NEAR) Act which prioritizes public health approaches to community violence prevention and intervention.

5. Budget sufficiently to fulfill non-discrimination laws. Do you support continued funding for the Office of Human Rights (and oppose cuts to the agency's budget) to ensure the agency can staff up sufficiently to end its case backlog, complete discrimination cases in a timely manner, and effectively engage in community education and outreach?

Yes, I support ongoing and increased funding for OHR to ensure that DC residents who are experiencing human rights violations can have their cases addressed in a timely manner.

6. Decriminalize Sex Work. Do you support enacting legislation to decriminalize sex work for adults, including the selling and purchasing of sex and third party involvement not involving fraud, violence or coercion?

I understand that this is an important issue especially for adult sex workers of color and LGBTQ+ residents who rely on sex work as a means of survival. Transparently, I am not as up to speed on this issue as I should be. I am open to learning more about the need to decriminalize sex work for adults and hope to get to a place where I have a more informed position on this issue.

7. Decriminalize Drug Use. Do you support removing the criminal penalties for drug possession for personal use and increasing investments in health services?

The nefarious, anti-Black, and racist motivations behind the War on Drugs necessitates an overhaul for how we address drug possession, drug use, and addiction services. I am open to learning more about how the potential harms and benefits of removing criminal penalties for the possession of drugs for personal use. DC has already made progress in successfully decriminalizing possession of cannabis for personal use which has become viewed as a best practice and matter of racial justice given the disproportionate arresting, sentencing, and jailing of people of color, especially Black and Latino men. However, we are in an ongoing public crisis dealing with the effects of opioids and especially the potency of fentanyl in our communities. We cannot and should not ignore the devastation that individuals, families, and communities are experiencing daily in Ward 7, across our city, and our nation.

8. Fully implement police and jail oversight and record sealing legislation. Do you support the full \$2.6 million in funding necessary to implement the legislation passed to improve oversight of our jails and police and to overhaul our criminal record sealing process?

Yes, I know that there is a lot of work for the DC government to do to improve the conditions of correctional facilities and implement evidence-based strategies that help justice-impacted residents successfully re-enter into our communities. If elected, I will collaborate with the Chair of the Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety and the Department of Corrections (DOC) to ensure dignified treatment and adequate living conditions within DC Jail and youth detention facilities and work with DOC to develop comprehensive reentry plans that provide necessary support services, such as job training and mental health counseling, to aid in the successful transition of residents back into their communities.

I believe it's essential for DC to improve its record sealing process so that people who were charged but never convicted or convicted of crimes that have since been decriminalized or legalized have a fairer shot at moving on with their lives and finding employment and housing. Returning citizens who are able to secure gainful employment with a liveable wage are less likely to reoffend. Therefore, reducing barriers for returning citizens can help reduce the likelihood that someone recommits a crime, which is a desired benefit for the District.

9. Socialize Our Housing. Do you support the D.C. Green New Deal for Housing that proposes to take a social housing approach to disrupt the failed system of the market-focused one?

All residents deserve housing that is affordable and accessible. Given the severity of housing unaffordability in the District, I support DC employing a variety of strategies that will create affordable housing for residents who are struggling the most to afford to stay in the District. I am particularly concerned about the fact that most new developments have not included three+ bedrooms, which are sorely needed.. I am equally concerned about senior residents who are struggling to safely age in place and access financial assistance to complete safety modifications. Once elected, I will continue my advocacy for increased investments in "Senior Villages" that help residents age in place and connect them to community resources. Villages help seniors get help with things such as grocery shopping, travel to doctor visits, and house chores.

I would also like to see DC expand its workforce housing so that residents who already work and live in the city can afford to continue living here and people who come to DC for jobs can live within the District, instead of neighboring Maryland and Virginia suburbs. Workforce housing and senior villages are two urgent needs that should be incorporated into new housing development strategies, such as the Green New Deal.

Submitted by Eboni-Rose Thompson, Candidate for Ward 7 DC Councilmember

Overall, I am supportive of initiatives that center and boost strategies to combat the growing climate crisis. Earlier this year, under my leadership as the Ward 7 Representative and President of the DC State Board of Education (SBOE), the Board passed the “Green New Deal for Schools” resolution which laid out five demands including safe and clean buildings, student pathways to jobs in sustainable energy industries, climate disaster plans for schools, climate-focused curriculum, and free and healthy school lunches. I believe that the District should continue to strengthen current policies designed to combat the climate crisis and will advocate for and support legislation that ensures we do just that.

*Please return your questionnaire responses in PDF format **by 11:59pm ET on Friday, April 19** on GLAA's [homepage](#). If you have trouble submitting your response through the page, you can email it to equal@glaa.org.*