

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 wholeheartedly support increasing taxes on the ultra wealthy and creating a substantial child tax income tax credit for low to moderate income families in DC as recommended by the Just Recovery DC Coalition. DC is plagued by extreme economic and racial inequality stemming from historically discriminatory policymaking and structural racism. The ultra wealthy spend smaller percentages of their income on mandatory spending items, including food, housing and child care.
- As a Legislative Director on the DC Council, I championed initiatives to make our tax code more progressive and structured our legislative agenda to include budget items that equitably redistributed wealth. Specifically, I positioned our Member to vote in favor of an increase in the Estate tax and the 2021 tax increase that raised taxes primarily on individuals and families earning more than one million dollars per year.

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?

- There is perhaps no higher use of Opioid Settlement Fund than to help those adversely impacted by the negligent actions of corporations that put profits over people. Harm reduction techniques as they relate to opioids have been proven very effective in saving lives and that is our ultimate goal as policymakers. The creation of two new harm reduction centers that work around the clock to save lives could help to change the course of the opioid crisis in DC.
- As a Legislative Director on the DC Council, I worked on the Opioid Overdose Prevention Act of 2019, which decriminalized the possession of drug paraphernalia as well as other activities related to personal drug use. The Act also placed opioid

antagonists in the hands of DC government employees and allowed courts to view the administration of opioid antagonists as a mitigating factor.

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?

- I am fully supportive of the Social Worker License Modernization Amendment Act that has been introduced in the DC Council.
- In my capacity as a Legislative Director, I worked to bring more mental health resources to underserved areas East of the River in Wards 7 and 8.

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, my public safety plan acknowledges that armed law enforcement officers are not the ideal responders in many situations, including mental health episodes that can be better addressed by a mental health professional.
- While working at the DC Council, I pushed through legislation to ban MPD from hiring police officers from other jurisdictions who have a record of misconduct. This is relevant to the role of police because it highlights my commitment to preventing overreach of policing and unnecessary policing.

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, the DC Office of Human Rights is a vital agency that addresses individual instances of discrimination in the District. Our antidiscrimination laws are not as meaningful without a pathway of recourse for individuals who have experienced discrimination.
- During the budgetary process when I worked at the council, I supported fully funding the Office of Human Rights. OCR deals with many kinds of discrimination, including discrimination against LGBTQ people, pregnant people, bullying, and more. Because the office focuses on so many different issues, it needs sufficient staff and funding to be able to adjudicate all of the issues brought to its attention. DC residents need a resource they can rely on to help provide accountability when they are victims of discrimination in any form.

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?

- Yes, I support decriminalizing sex work that is regulated to protect workers and prevent any form of exploitation. Sex workers deserve to be respected and protected in their

occupations. They also deserve the right to join together in a union and collectively bargain for better wages, benefits, and respect.

- When I was a Legislative Director on the DC Council, I directed my office to cosponsor a bill to remove criminal penalties associated with the buying and selling of sex. We were able to get a public hearing for this legislation for the first time.

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

- Yes.
- As I mentioned above, I backed legislation to remove criminal penalties for the possession of drug paraphernalia related to opioid use. This was a first step in removing criminal penalties for personal use drug possession and as Councilmember, I intend to expand upon this legislation

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, my public safety plan relies on improved oversight of police because it is essential to repairing the torn relationship between the police and the community. I Also have a plan to facilitate record sealing for returning citizen
- As I mentioned above, I was able to pass legislation prohibiting police officers from other jurisdictions from being hired by MPD.

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?

- Yes, social housing is a core plank of my affordable housing plan. I advocate following Vienna's approach to affordable housing. This model involves the city buying land for residential development, soliciting proposals from private developers, and ensuring affordable housing for lower and moderate-income residents. Rents are regulated to ensure affordability.
- We must also fully fund the affordable housing preservation fund to ensure it has ample resources to preserve affordable housing projects around the District. A portion of the Housing Production Trust Fund should be dedicated to meeting this goal.
- On the DC Council, I worked to advance rent control reform which would drastically expand the number of rental units under rent control in DC. We can expand rent control by increasing the number of properties covered under rent control, tightening restrictions on the ability of landlords to raise rents, and eliminating voluntary agreements that allow landlords to remove rent control protections in exchange for upgrades to an apartment or house. Rent increases can be reined in by capping them at the rate of inflation and limiting them to one time a year with notice to the tenant. Voluntary agreements should be

eliminated because they often result in tenants losing rent control protection in negotiations with landlords in order to receive upgrades to their units. These were all key components of the Reclaim Rent Control proposal that I worked with coalition leaders to co introduce as a legislative director along with Briane Nadeau's office.

Please return your questionnaire responses in PDF format by 11:59 pm ET on Friday, April 19 on GLASs homepage. If you have trouble submitting your response through the page, you can email it to equal@glaa.org