

Back to Basics

2026 GLAA Questionnaire – Elissa Silverman

The following questions are based on [Back to Basics: GLAA Policy Brief 2026](#). 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. Fight for Home Rule. To protect DC’s LGBTQ+ communities, will you oppose every single effort to infringe on DC’s autonomy?

Yes, and we need to be smart and strategic in our defense of Home Rule and of all our residents, particularly those who have been targeted by Trump’s hate. District government needs to be much more collaborative and pro-active in anticipating and responding to Trump and the Republican-led Congress. That means ending MPD collaboration with ICE and following our own sanctuary city law. We can’t advocate for Home Rule if we don’t follow our own local law.

And just like we do a fiscal and racial equity analysis of legislation, we should be doing a Trump and GOP analysis: Is this subject to pushback from Congress? We should get the Attorney General involved right from the start if there is a threat, and coordinate with the Mayor and Delegate. We all need to be on the same page to protect our city, our residents, our

businesses.

I was a strong voice for Home Rule and against Trump during his first term in office when I was on the Council. When I left Council, I spent time campaigning in Pennsylvania against Trump's election. I brought more than a hundred DC residents to knock on doors. It was one of the few areas in PA that turned more blue.

2. Stop Enabling Federal Overreach. Will you refuse to cooperate with the Federal Government in its undemocratic use of power, including the authoritarian deployment of National Guard troops?

Yes. Again, the Council needs to be collaborative and proactive with Attorney General Schwalb, the Mayor, our Delegate to Congress in defending our city. Unfortunately Trump does have power over our National Guard by law, but we need to limit it to what the law says and not extend that power in any way. We should also work to change that so the Mayor has the same power every governor has in directing its National Guard.

3. Invest In a Just Legal System. To support LGBTQ+ people involved in the legal system, do you support limiting pre-trial detention at a minimum to the evidence-based laws in place before 2023 and investing more resources into civil legal help?

Yes, I am a supporter of civil legal help to give residents the resources they need whether it be landlord tenant court or dealing with medical debt. I increased appropriations for mediation to avoid eviction and was a big supporter of Tzedek DC, which helps residents with debt. On pre-trial detention, I am a fan of following what are the evidence-based best practices.

4. Safe and Warm Homes. In light of disproportionate representation of LGBTQ+ among people without stable housing, do you support strengthening and enforcing the existing laws and investing the District's resources to end homelessness in DC?

Yes. In my prior two terms on the D.C. Council, I was a reliable vote for increasing programs to build and fund housing. Yet I will say I am concerned that we are not efficient in both the administration of housing vouchers and we have too many vacant units that could be occupied. We need to do everything we can to put people in safe housing.

5. Abundant and Nutritious Food. Do you support increasing the nutrition assistance program benefits to fill the gap created by the federal government?

Yes, especially for our youngsters. It's impossible to sit in class and learn if you are hungry. We know there's a good return on investment from SNAP and other programs.

6. Power to the People. Do you commit to providing economic relief to DC's LGBTQ+ residents and businesses by investing in energy and water infrastructure that prioritizes the

people of DC over corporate profits?

Yes. When I join the Council I will advocate for more oversight over DC Water and the Public Service Commission, which regulates our utilities. In my prior time, I was concerned we'd get calls from residents who had five-figure utility bills. It shouldn't get to that—we need to work with these families to get them on payment plans and do an energy audit to figure out ways to lower their bills. But most of all, we need to hold the utilities accountable.

7. Health Care is Human Right. Will you use every tool within your power to ensure transgender youth and adults have access to healthcare in DC?

Yes. I am one of the Americans impacted by the loss of subsidies to the Affordable Care Act so I have taken a tremendous interest in healthcare and health insurance. Everyone should have access to quality health care that meets their needs. That includes gender affirming care.

8. Health Care is a Smart Investment. Do you commit to opposing cuts to the Health Care Alliance and Medicaid health insurance programs to balance DC's budget?

As I mentioned, I will prioritize access to health insurance. It is not physically or psychologically healthy for our city—and not economically healthy either—to have people wait until dire situations to go to the doctor. I would reverse the Alliance cuts and figure out the best way to make sure lower-income families and those without employer-based healthcare get insurance. And then we need to make sure they go to the doctor!

9. Access to Public Benefits. Do you commit to creating the most accessible system for program beneficiaries possible to minimize LGBTQ+ people not being able to access benefits due to bureaucracy?

Yes. We use too much bureaucratise to explain to people how to use government programs instead of explaining it in plain language. We need to remove barriers to access so people get the support they need to live successful lives.

10. Fight Crime At The Source. Do you support decriminalizing sex work and making better investments in violence prevention activities?

Again, I believe in evidence based approaches to violence reduction. Let's follow what the experts say.

Please return your questionnaire responses in PDF format by 11:59pm ET on Friday, April 24 to equal@glaa.org.