

## CLARK RAY

### Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, DC 2010 Questionnaire for D.C. Council Candidates

#### MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

- 1. Will you oppose any effort to hold an initiative in the District that would take away the civil marriage rights now enjoyed by same-sex couples, and publicly campaign for marriage equality in the event such an initiative is held?**

Yes. I will do everything in my power to oppose any initiative that would deny or diminish full marriage equality in the District. I have lobbied in support of Marriage Equality on the Hill with members of Congress and staff, and I am a supporter of the Campaign for All DC Families--the group founded to help secure and protect marriage-equality in the District. I testified before City Council for the bill and have spoken out for marriage equality across all corners of the District. I will work with the nearly 200 gay-affirming DC clergy who signed a marriage equality pledge last year and I will continue to work with individuals like Rev. Willie Wilson who support civil equality for all people regardless of their sexual orientation. I do support the right of a religious organization to practice the tenets of their religion; but at the same time, I will insist that the LGBT community is treated equally under the law. It is important to note that I am a member of the LGBT community, with a partner, and we both know how important this right is to us. I will work to protect this right and fight any initiative on the ballot because I believe that it would be an expensive and contentious battle, one that will leave scars on a City already too divided by race and class. I am running for Council to continue the work I have done to bring our City together.

However, if we were ever forced into an initiative or referendum, I will be a strong leader and a frontline soldier in the fight to retain our marriage rights. I will make my stand for marriage-equality known at every opportunity and in front of every audience. I will also assist groups such as the Campaign for All DC Families to raise funds to fight such an initiative.

- 2. If the District's civil marriage equality is taken away either directly by an act of Congress or by a ballot measure, will you support immediate re-passage of civil marriage equality?**

Yes. I would immediately join with other marriage-equality supporters on Council to introduce a legislative remedy. I would speak out across the City for this legislation and would work to make it law once again in DC. I have spent much of my life in public service with a goal of bringing them together. I will do the same on this issue and will not rest until the LGBT community in the District of Columbia has and retains marriage equality.

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**3. Do you agree that private contractors doing business with the District should be required to provide equal benefits including health insurance to same-sex partners?**

Yes. I am opposed to any exclusion of the LGBT community from the District's economic development. I will work to ensure that private contractors who do business with the District are required to provide equal benefits including health insurance to same sex partners. I will seek to fully examine and reinvigorate communications with and among developers, city contractors, and others, to ensure compliance. I will publish an annual census of compliance, to provide a publicly accountable guidepost.

**4. Will you oppose legislation containing either a "conscience clause" that would allow anyone to claim a Human Rights Act exemption at will, as was proposed by Councilmember Yvette Alexander during consideration of the marriage equality bill last year; or a "business necessity" exemption that would allow taxpayer-funded charities run by religious groups to discriminate against married same-sex couples, as was proposed by the Archdiocese of Washington?**

Yes. I am opposed to allowing people to claim a right to discriminate. Both the "conscience clause" as proposed by Councilmember Alexander or a "business necessity" exemption are an anathema to the concept that we are all to be treated equally under the law. I will oppose any organization receiving taxpayer money to discriminate or be exempt from our human rights law. It would be unconscionable to have taxes paid by members of the LGBT community in the District of Columbia fund an organization that was given the right to discriminate against the LGBT community. I am aware that the Archdiocese wanted to discriminate using public funds through Catholic Charities. They even threatened to end their foster care program, an action that I equate to blackmail. I can assure you that I will oppose such future actions and will stand up for the rights of all LGBT individuals.

**PUBLIC HEALTH**

**5. Do you support sufficient funding to ensure that the drive to make HIV testing routine among District residents includes counseling and treatment referrals for those testing positive?**

Yes. It is clear that HIV has been treated differently from other infectious diseases and this most likely has contributed to the spread of the disease. I believe that HIV testing should become a routine part of physical exams for adults and even teens. The spread of HIV is accentuated because so many people in relationships still do not know their status, thus putting their partner at risk. I support making standard - HIV testing in all DC operated health care facilities and working with the hospital association of DC and other medical groups to encourage it to become routine as well in all private facilities. This still will not prevent patients from saying they don't want to be tested. For those patients, we should have anonymous testing sites if that makes them feel more

comfortable. I do support mandatory testing in DC Jails.

I do support having post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for HIV provided at all D.C. emergency rooms, urgent care centers and health clinics. The availability of PEP should be publicized and included in student health classes. PEP needs to be started within 72 hours after exposure to HIV to be effective, so people must not be forced to wait for a doctor's office appointment. Studies have shown PEP to be up to 100% effective if administered within 24 hours followed by a four week course of medication.

I believe that in today's world where people enjoy sexual contact through their senior years that we should ask the Office on Aging to work on ensuring that DC seniors receive HIV prevention programs that are specifically developed for them, and that they have access to materials on safe-sex. These materials be shared with private health care providers. I have supported and will continue to support organizations like Whitman Walker Clinic, US Helping US, and others that do testing, and I understand that a crucial part of testing is to make sure that anyone who tests positive for HIV is given appropriate counseling and treatment referrals. Today we have both the understanding of how to avoid HIV/AIDS and the ability to treat people who are infected with the virus if we can give them counseling and bring them into treatment. Not to do in my mind is criminal.

**6. Are you committed to continuing and expanding the District's condom distribution program to include water-based lubricant and tracking of their distribution to specified locations?**

Yes. I am committed to expanding the District's condom distribution program in any way that makes it more effective and that gets more people to use condoms. It is troubling to reflect upon the fact that, in the late 1980s and into the 1990s, condom distribution was more commonplace in community spaces (clubs, bars, and the like), and I will push for a renewed condom distribution and availability. We know that the use of condoms is the safest and most effective prevention method for reducing HIV transmission, therefore I believe that condoms and water-based lubricant need to be made widely and consistently available throughout the District. The distribution program needs to be updated and needs to become more effective. I have supported programs like the Fuk!T condom program and will make sure that the Council conducts the appropriate oversight of the Department of Health so that we don't run out of condoms like we have in the past and/or discover that they are in storage and not ready for distribution as happened this year prior to the Pride Festival. This isn't a program that can afford to be out of service at anytime. We need to both track the distribution of condoms and to understand where the  
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distribution is most effective.

**7. Will you support legislation giving the directors of the Office of GLBT Affairs and the Office of African Affairs the authority to issue competitive grants as other minority constituent offices have, that will be open to organizations serving the populations within the offices' purview?**

Yes. I support giving them grant-making authority but as a member of the Council I will work to make sure that each office has an oversight process in place to make sure that the funds are being granted to legitimate organizations are being used for the purposes for which they are awarded. We have to move government away from the cronyism we have seen in the awarding of grants across the board and we need to make sure that the policies in place at the offices will avoid any favoritism.

**8. Describe steps you will support to improve performance at the HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD, and TB Administration (HAHSTA), including in HIV prevention, HIV/AIDS surveillance, and mental health services.**

We need to look carefully at HAHSTA and how they are using their funding and makes sure that they are serving the broadest possible. We need a new, external, and highly rigorous audit of all prevention programs and contracts. We need to see more targeted education programs delivered to specific communities, better HIV/AIDS surveillance through public/private partnerships, more focus on mental health services and strict and regular council oversight. We need community and health advisory groups to make recommendations on how to deal with each of these issues and bring experts in to help with developing agency guidelines and policies. We can aggressively search out best practices nationwide, and worldwide, to establish the District as the most creative and comprehensive steward of prevention.

## **PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE JUDICIARY**

**9. Will you support funding for mandatory lesbian, gay bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) sensitivity and diversity training for all members of the Metropolitan Police Department and the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department?**

Yes. I have experience in providing training for City employees which I oversaw at the Department of Parks and Recreation when I was Director. I think it is crucial that all City employees are required to attend a sensitivity training program. I will support funding the program and will work with the Mayor's Office of GLBT Affairs, GLOV, THE and others who can provide the appropriate training for the Metropolitan Police Department and Fire and Emergency Medical Services. As a former Reserve Police  
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Officer and one assigned for a period of time to the Gay & Lesbian Liaison Unit (GLLA), I understand how crucial this training is and that it is important for all members of the force to receive it. I have spoken to Chief Lanier and to Deputy Chief Grooms about this and will work to make sure that funds are available to implement the program.

**10. Will you support a budget for the Office of Police Complaints large enough to avoid developing a backlog of cases?**

Yes. As we know, the Office of Police Complaints (OPC), which opened in 2001 has consistently had a case backlog – this is unacceptable! The Metropolitan Police Department needs to be more accountable to the community. Appropriate Council oversight is needed to address this issue.

In 2007 OPC received and mediated the most complaints of any year since it was established. I believe that independent oversight is a key to holding our public servants accountable. The staff of OPC have shown patience, persistence, thoroughness and scrupulousness in pursuing their mission. They have brought integrity, and a commitment to fairness for all—not just those who file complaints, but those against whom they are filed, and the wider community from which both are drawn.

**11. Will you support efforts to rein in police officials who respond to legitimate crime concerns with unsustainable, media-centric quick fixes that infringe constitutionally protected civil liberties? And will you do so without waiting for courts to overturn them, as the U.S. Court of Appeals did to the Neighborhood Safety Zone initiative in 2009**

Yes. I believe that while we need to give the MPD the discretion they need to keep our residents safe we need to ensure that the methods they use don't infringe on people's rights.

As someone who has walked the beat as a Reserve Police Officer I am very concerned about crime and have spoken out on hate crimes and the increase in violent crime. But I

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don't believe that fighting crime necessarily requires turning the police into an occupation force. We need better basic policing, starting with officers getting out of their cars and getting to know the people in neighborhoods.

I also support reactivating the Fair and Inclusive Policing Task Force. There are many officers in the MPD who are working in our communities and being effective on a day to day basis. We need to ensure that the leadership of the Department looks at the successes these officers are having in their assigned areas.

**Will you support maintaining the award-winning Gay and Lesbian Liaison Unit with both a citywide scope and a dedicated and well-trained central core unit with a full-time sergeant?**

Yes. As a former Reserve Police Officer assigned to the Gay Lesbian Liaison Unit (GLLU) I understand how crucial this unit is to the LGBT community. I believe it was outrageous for the Chief to decimate the unit. The GLLU was an example of what community policing is and should be for any neighborhood and while I support having officers from across the District join the Unit, I am in favor of having the full roster of seven (7) members and a full-time Sergeant, restored. The old saying "if it ain't broke don't fix it" applies to this scenario! It was a mistake by the Chief not to keep the unit intact.

**11. Will you press for increased oversight of the Metropolitan Police Department's gathering and analysis of crime statistics to ensure greater comprehensiveness and objectivity, including transgender-related hate crime data?**

Yes. We have seen in the past few years what appears to be a willingness to manipulate statistics in order for the Department to look better. If indeed true, this is an injustice to the residents of the District of Columbia. Hate crimes have not been correctly reported and thus hate crime statistics are not accurate and there has not been a valid response from the Administration. It is believed that violent crime is being underreported. I support having the Council develop a special oversight committee under the Committee on Public Safety and the Judiciary to do review this area and make sure that statistics are being reported accurately and in a timely manner.

**12. Do you support making the D.C. Attorney General an elected position?**

Yes. I support that and have spoken out on it. I will continue to use my voice to talk about this to the public at community forums and as I go door to door as we look to the referendum this November. The Attorney General needs to represent the people and do so without any political loyalties.

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The AG today is widely seen as simply being a spokesperson for the Mayor as a part of the Mayor's cabinet. This is a situation that should be changed.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

**13. Will you support a budget for the Office of Human Rights large enough to allow it to keep the backlog at below 70 aged cases; keep below 210 days the average time it takes to issue a probable cause finding; and expand education, prevention, and language access efforts?**

*Rather than resorting to unsustainable, media-centric quick fixes with constitutionally questionable methods, the city should recommit itself to improving basic policing and to consulting with community voices, and stop trying to pit groups of citizens against one another.*

Yes. The District government has made great strides in recent years both in strengthening the D.C. Human Rights Act of 1977 (DCHRA) and in enforcing it through the Office of Human Rights (OHR). Among the notable improvements are legislation outlawing the use of genetic information as a basis for discriminatory treatment; legislation expanding the definition of "marital status" within DCHRA to prohibit discrimination against registered domestic partners; and clarifying legislation explicitly

prohibiting discrimination based on "gender identity or expression."

Gustavo Velasquez, the current head of the office reports that OHR in FY 2009 recorded a 32% growth in the number of new cases; educated 2,847 employers, workers and residents about their employment and housing rights; increased community awareness with posters in the Metro System and multilingual print and broadcast ads; trained 700 employees from 15 agencies on compliance with the D.C. Language Access Act of 2004; and developed a formula through which government agencies are rated on EEO compliance, training 158 employees designated with EEO responsibilities from 52 agencies.<sup>41</sup>

Clearly this work load requires the necessary funding to employ the staff with expertise to do the job in a timely fashion and support appropriate levels of funding. I also support a separate line item in the budget for the District Commission on Human Rights which I believe is now appropriate considering its independent status.

**14. Will you block ceremonial resolutions and otherwise decline to honor individuals or organizations that promote any sort of bigotry?**

Yes. I will vote to block ceremonial resolutions and otherwise decline to honor individuals and organization that promote any sort of bigotry. I spoke out when the Mayor honored the Executive Director of PFOX and refused to rescind that certificate and I will make sure that any resolutions or honors that the Council

wants to give are first carefully vetted by my staff before I would vote for them. I think that using the bully pulpit that an elected official has is a part of the job and the responsibility that comes with being elected and I will use it to speak out against discrimination wherever I find it.

**15. Are you committed to including a transgender representative on the D.C. Commission on Human Rights?**

Yes. I am also committed to making sure that the transgender community is consulted whenever I am considering legislation that will in any way impact the LGBT community. This includes everything from healthcare, to education, to economic development issues, workforce development and public safety. The recently released LGB Health report from the Mayor's GLBT Affairs Office noted that there were no questions asked about transgender residents. While this may be the case now and the lack of the data on transgender persons may stem from the failure by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to include transgender people in BRFSS we cannot allow this to continue. I will work on the Council to make sure this doesn't happen again and that the next report will be on the health of the LGBT population in the District.

**16. Do you agree that the Director of the Office of Human Rights should be required to have professional training and experience in civil rights law enforcement?**

Yes. I think that when one is looking to fill positions in the cabinet one should look for those who have the most experience and are most qualified to lead the agency for which they are being considered. If there isn't a qualified candidate with such professional training and experience in civil rights law enforcement that is one thing but one must look for people with that background and in the I believe that in the District of Columbia we are fortunate to have people qualified in so many diverse fields.

**PUBLIC EDUCATION AND YOUTH**

**17. Will you oppose both federal and local voucher programs that fund students in religious schools that are beyond the protections of the D.C. Human Rights Act?**

Yes. I am opposed to using taxpayer money for private schools. The reality is that in nearly all school voucher experiments, including the one here in DC, students end up in private religious schools. We then end up using taxpayer money to put a child in school where they don't have the protection of the DC Human Rights Act and they are often taught that homosexuality is wrong. It is time to stop using taxpayer public money for any school voucher program.



**18. Will you support improved services and treatment for gay and transgender homeless youth, including transitional housing?**

Yes. I will support improving both services and treatment. I have supported the work of THE and will work with the DC Trans Coalition and continue to support their work. We must expand the services that are being offered at the Wanda Alston House and continue to strengthen the partnership of the DC Department of Human Services and the Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness. I will work to see that there is appropriate funding, whether through my support of a revised earmark program or through city agencies for improved service for gay and transgender homeless youth, including transitional housing. I have supported Covenant House, SMYAL and MetroTeen AIDS and will continue to work with organizations and individuals who have new and innovative ideas on how we can best serve this population. We must recognize that discrimination against transgender people is a real problem that needs to be addressed by our city leaders. Transgender youth continue to be bullied and harassed in schools and transgender adults are often treated with gawking curiosity, or outright malevolence which sometimes translates into physical violence.

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**19. Will you oppose the use of either federal or District taxpayer funds to promote "abstinence only until marriage" sex education that undermines safer-sex programs by excluding more comprehensive information?**

Yes. For years one of the reasons I was opposed to such programs was because we weren't allowed to engage in civil marriage. But that was only one of the reasons for my opposition to "abstinence only until marriage" sex education programs, now I believe that such programs undermine appropriate safer-sex education programs and that young men and women deserve to understand that while "abstinence until marriage" may be one choice, should they make another one, which most young people do, they need to know how to protect themselves from simple stds to HIV/AIDS to unwanted pregnancy.

**CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES**

**20. Do you support the right of adults in the District to choose adult-oriented entertainment for themselves, and the right of appropriately licensed and zoned businesses to provide it?**

Yes. I support the right of adults to choose adult-oriented entertainment and will work with any business to see that they can get appropriately licensed and locate in an appropriately-zoned business area. We cannot allow these businesses to be zoned out of existence.

23. **Will you support legislation to curb abuses by NIMBYs who are now allowed to file an endless series of baseless complaints to harass or extort bars and restaurants?** Yes. I have worked with many businesses and neighborhood groups to see that businesses on 17<sup>th</sup> street such as Hank's Oyster Bar. An example of my ability to work with both groups is that I have been endorsed by nearly every business on 17<sup>th</sup> street and also by the majority of the Dupont ANC and many members of the DCCA. Groups that are usually at odds with each other have endorsed my candidacy because of my ability to bring resolutions to issues which allow the businesses to open and thrive. I will support legislation to make sure that we don't put overwhelming hurdles in front of business owners.

Furthermore, my opponent is considered the father of highly constrictive zoning overlays, such as the one in Cleveland Park, which an extensive Washington Post feature found to have stifled retail corridors in that neighborhood. My opponent testified recently, in support of maintaining the decades-old overlay, that retail forces had not changed since the establishment of the overlay. I will take a new and forward-thinking approach to enhance our storefront economies.

**24. What are your thoughts regarding GLAA's proposal, explained in Agenda: 2010, to mitigate the problems associated with prostitution by legalizing and regulating it? What will you do to provide alternatives to survival sex for at-risk populations like homeless youth and transgenders?**

I believe that the issue of prostitution is one that society has dealt with for 1000s of years and is one that will continue. Many country's have legalized prostitution and set health standards for prostitutes

I have taken no position on this issue. I recognize that whatever we do prostitution will continue but I do not believe that the issue is one we should focus on at this time as there is no way that the District of Columbia will deal with it now.

What I do support is that we work to make sure that those who feel forced to go into prostitution only to support themselves or their families are helped to find other ways to earn a living. That we make sure that if prostitution is punished that the John's that hire prostitutes are punished as severely as the prostitutes who they hire. Prostitution involves more than one person.

**Your record is part of your rating. Please list any actions that you have taken that may help illustrate your record on behalf of gay men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgenders.**

- **Openly Gay Political Appointee for the Clinton-Gore Administration;**
- **Neighborhood Services Coordinator;**
- **Member of the Gay & Lesbian Liaison Unit – Metropolitan Police Department;**
- **Founding President – Metropolitan Gay Gaymes Inc.;**
- **2008 Heil-Balin Community Service Award Recipient– Gertrude Stein Club**
- **Director, DC Mayor’s Office of Community Relations & Services**
- **Director, DC Department of Parks & Recreation**

**Your answers should be typed on separate paper rather than on this form. You must sign your name on each answer sheet to indicate your personal commitment to your answers.**

**Please return your signed questionnaire responses by Tuesday, August 17 to GLAA, P.O. Box 75265, Washington, D.C. 20013.**

**In addition to sending your signed hard copy, please email a copy (in any major word processor or text format) for loading on GLAA's website ([www.glaa.org](http://www.glaa.org)) to equal([iglaa.org](mailto:equal@iglaa.org)). Thank you.**