

Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, DC

2010 Questionnaire for D.C. Mayor Candidates

Mayor Adrian M. Fenty Response

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. As I have indicated in previous GLAA surveys and at various forums I will strongly oppose any efforts and will publicly campaign for marriage equality if for any reason an initiative is held.

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.

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.

4. Will you veto 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. All charities that receive District funds should follow the Human Rights Act and should not discriminate against married same-sex couples.

PUBLIC HEALTH

5. Will you submit budgets sufficient to ensure that the drive to make HIV testing routine among District residents includes counseling and treatment referrals for those testing positive?

Yes. We will continue to provide the Department of Health and community groups with resources to reduce the spread of HIV

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

We will continue to expand the condom distribution program, which already includes water-based lubricants. In the past few years we have developed a tracking system to determine which community-based organizations receive condoms and we monitor what areas these groups are working.

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 would be supportive of giving the Mayor's Office of GLBT Affairs grant making authority. It should be noted that the Mayor's Office of GLBT Affairs provides technical assistance to other agencies and we are looking into ways of making our grants more competitive.

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

We will build on the success of current programs including efforts to get HIV testing done in all medical settings, expand the distribution of condoms, implement an aggressive strategy to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS among MSM's and continue social marketing efforts to encourage people to practice safe sex and promote access to early entrance to care if someone is HIV positive.

## PUBLIC SAFETY AND THE JUDICIARY

9. Will you submit budgets that include 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?

The MP D and Fire/EMS currently have money in their budget for diversity training and all current members have received some basic diversity training. We will continue to provide adequate funding in the budget so that each department can expand on its LGBT sensitivity training as appropriate.

10. Will you include representatives of the LGBT community in the search process when you appoint a new Police Chief and a new Fire/EMS Chief?

Chief Rubin has done an excellent job improving the delivery of services as Fire/EMS Chief and at this time we have no plan of replacing him. We will include representatives of the LGBT community if we conduct an open search for this position in the future.

11. Will you submit budgets for the Office of Police Complaints large enough to avoid developing a backlog of cases?

We will submit budgets for the Office of Police Complaints that will be adequate for them to fulfill their mission given the fiscal constraints that the city currently faces.

12. Will you 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?

We will continue to support current MP D crime fighting strategies that have led to some of the lowest homicide and violent crime rates in decades.

13. Are you committed to 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?

I will continue to support the Chief's decision on appropriate staffing levels of the unit and Chief Lanier's plan to increase the number of affiliate officers. Member of the recently expanded unit are about to participate in a three day intensive training to enhance their knowledge of the LGBT community. The unit is now led by a Captain and a Sergeant who both have gained enormous insight into the LGBT community.

14. Will you insist on greater comprehensiveness and objectivity in the Metropolitan Police Department's gathering and analysis of crime statistics, including transgender-related hate crime data?

MP D has made improvements in gathering and analyzing crime statistics but there is always room for improvement. MPD released the District's first hate crimes report this year with an addendum in February that include transgender-related data for the first time.

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

I support an elected prosecutor, and even went as far as supporting an amended bill, similar to HR 4009 introduced by Congresswoman Norton. The legislation passed by the DC Council however, attempts to create an elected corporate counsel, which is a different matter entirely. As we all know, effective government requires effective legal representation to defend and support the Mayor's policy decisions in all aspects of government, including the courts. With an elected corporation counsel, the Mayor would lose control of the policy and direction of the District government's legal business. Furthermore, the Council's legislation keeps agency lawyers under the direction of the elected attorney general, not the Mayor and subordinate agency heads. Such a situation would be unsustainable and require the Mayor to increase resources to provide for the necessary legal representation and guidance, something the bill did not take into account, despite our repeated efforts.

## HUMAN RIGHTS

16. Will you submit budgets 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?

The Office of Human Rights will receive adequate funding to exceed its goals and responsibilities. We've made tremendous progress reducing the back log and our aggressive mandatory mediation program has significantly reduced the number of aged cases. Currently, the backlog at OHR is well under 70 aged cases, it takes less than 210 days to issue a probable cause determination and the Office has sponsored several education forums including a Fair Housing symposium and a Language Access Act conference.

17. Will you refuse to issue proclamations and otherwise decline to honor individuals or organizations that promote any sort of bigotry? How will you ensure that such honors are not mistakenly issued through administrative error?

Yes, absolutely. I personally and professionally apologize for offense understandably caused by the letter sent in error to PFOX. We have taken steps to improve our internal process's with the help of the Office of GLBT Affairs and instituted a review at the Chief of Staff level to prevent future errors going forward.

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

Yes. We are actively reviewing candidates to serve as a transgender representative on the D. C. Commission on Human Rights.

19. Will you include representatives of the LGBT community in the search process when you appoint a new Director of the Office of Human Rights?

Director Velasquez has done an excellent job as Director of the Office of Human Rights and there are no plans to replace him. However, if we institute a new search we will certainly welcome the participation of representatives from the LGBT community.

20. Will you appoint a Director of the Office of Human Rights with professional training and experience in civil rights law enforcement?

That will be a factor in hiring a Director if the position becomes open.

## PUBLIC EDUCATION AND YOUTH

21. 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?

We do not support any local funding for voucher programs, but does support continued federal funding of the Opportunity Scholarship Program as part of a 3-sector approach and will request that any Federal reauthorization require participants to comply with the Human Rights Act

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

Yes. The funding of the Wanda Alston House, which provides an LGBT specific transitional housing program with wraparound services, is one of the major accomplishments of the Fenty Administration. The Mayor's Office of GLB T Affairs has been working directly with our homeless service program to identify further training for other homeless service providers and I've appointed a LGBT youth representative to the Interagency Council on Homelessness.

23. 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. We have developed a comprehensive health education curriculum that includes abstinence as an important part of HIV/AIDS/STD prevention but believe that a curriculum that exclusively promotes "abstinence only until marriage" is ineffective.

#### CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES

24. 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.

25. Will you support legislation to curb abuses by NIMBY s who are now allowed to file an endless series of baseless complaints to harass or extort bars and restaurants?

As long as this legislation can provide some protections for legitimate residential concerns (i.e. the placement of a nightclub next to an apartment), I would be supportive.

26. 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?

Currently, I don't support the legalization and regulation of prostitution. That being said, I am committed to working with our Department of Health, Department of Mental Health and Department of Employment Services to see what comprehensive wrap around services we can provide for residents who have to engage in survival sex.



## Fenty Record on GLBT Issues

As a member of the City Council I was a strong advocate for GLBT issues, and am on record as supporting same-sex marriage. As a candidate for Mayor I was the first to publicly support marriage equality and under my leadership as Mayor the following has been accomplished.

- \* Signed the historic Religious Freedom and Marriage Equality Amendment Act that legalized same sex marriages in the District of Columbia.

- \* Provided funding for the Wanda Alston House, the first transitional housing program in the District for GLBT youth.

- \* Released three comprehensive HIV/AIDS surveillance reports, including the first report that specifically discusses the status of HIV/AIDS among men who have sex with men.

We have significantly bolstered our HIV/AIDS prevention efforts by distributing over 3.2 million condoms in 2009 and expect to surpass 4 million in 2010. We have increased the number of people getting into treatment within the first three months of diagnosis, doubled the number of people receiving HIV medication, doubled the number of people taking HIV tests annually and now have 7 out of 8 hospitals offering routine HIV tests as part of emergency care.

- \* Held three GLBT economic development summits that were attended by 150-200 attendees, and increased the number of GLBT owned businesses on the District of Columbia's supply schedule (from 3 to 15 businesses).

- \* Disseminated resources in DCPS to reduce bullying and create safe space for GLBT students.

- \* Developed and implemented a new comprehensive health curriculum that includes information about sexual orientation and gender identity.

- \* Released the first ever biased-crime report in the District's history.

- \* Release the first ever GLB health report in the District's history and have taken steps to ensure that transgender health data is included in future reports.

- \* Provided cultural competency training for DC government employees, social service providers and private sector employers.

- \* Delivered educational programs for the community including leadership development, career training and improving access to government services for members and leaders of the GLBT community.