

**Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, DC 2012 Questionnaire for Ward 5
D.C. Council Candidates**

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

1. In the event of congressional action leading to a ballot initiative in the District that would take away the civil marriage rights now enjoyed by same-sex couples, will you oppose the initiative and will you publicly defend civil marriage equality?

I will firmly and openly oppose any initiative to harm marriage equality in the District. In my view, marriage equality was the signature legislative achievement of Council Period 18. The District was the first place south of the Mason-Dixon Line and the first majority-minority jurisdiction to grant same-sex couples the same marriage rights and responsibilities as opposite-sex couples. This victory for fairness and equality was also a victory for Home Rule, and any attempt by Congress to force a ballot initiative on the District would be a direct attack against DC's right to self-determination and the civil rights of our residents.

While campaigning for the Ward 5 council seat, I have stressed that I am an unyielding proponent of the right to same-sex marriage, and I will continue to not only publicly defend, but actively fight for that right to continue if Congressional meddling attempts to interfere.

PUBLIC HEALTH

2. 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?

I would most definitely support giving the Office of GLBT Affairs and the Office of African Affairs the authority to issue competitive grants. Such grant-making authority would allow these offices more autonomy in how to best serve their constituencies and would restore their place among other similar offices throughout District government.

3. Will you defend the District's hard-won and life-saving medical marijuana program against attacks or further restrictions, whether from Congress, federal officials, D.C. officials, or residents?

I fully support the District's medical marijuana program, as I believe in the efficacy of medical marijuana to relieve pain and suffering for those with HIV/AIDS, cancer, and other chronic illnesses. For those residents suffering from chronic pains and diseases, medical marijuana may greatly impact their quality of life and spare them from the side effects of pharmaceuticals. But I am also adamant that there must be a better plan to locate cultivation centers and dispensaries throughout the city, rather than concentrating them in Ward 5. The current cap on cultivation centers, which is six per ward, was determined because of the number of facilities that have already received preliminary approval at the time the cap was proposed. I also believe the number should be revisited and determined not by what is already in the pipeline for Ward 5, but based on thorough analysis and long-term projections on how cultivation centers will directly impact our community.

K.R. MOFFIE

Medical marijuana has the promise of improving the health of countless residents across the city. However, these benefits should not negatively impact the quality of life for Ward 5 residents by diminishing the potential to positively transform our communities through responsible, community-oriented economic development. As we move forward, those who are most impacted by these facilities should and will have a seat at the table when it comes time to make a decision.

4. 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.

Without a doubt, the rate of STDs and STIs in the District is a serious public health concern. Rates of HIV/AIDS in the District are at epidemic levels - HIV is at 3.2%. The city has made important strides in addressing this problem, increasing the number of individuals tested and passing out condoms to those who are at risk. However, we still have a lot of work to do.

We must allocate sufficient resources for prevention efforts like needle exchange programs, culturally competent education and outreach programs, and condom distribution. I also fully support reaching out to segments of the city that are slipping behind in our outreach efforts like seniors, youth, African American MSM, those who are deaf or hearing impaired, transgender individuals, and especially our residents that live east of the river.

I applaud HAHSTA's efforts to create robust partnerships with other agencies. Programs like DCTest text-messaging service, the Rubber Revolution free condom distribution program, and media campaigns are precisely the types of programs that effectively reach our residents and should be supported. I also applaud the Mayor for convening the Mayor's Commission on HIV/AIDS.

I would like to see continued focus on treatment and treatment adherence programs, as research shows that driving down viral loads dramatically reduces transmission rates. I am also concerned about the status of needle exchange programs in the District. Drug use accounts for a significant proportion of new infections. With Prevention Works closing, we must ensure that we have sufficient service providers and funding to maintain needle exchange programs within the District; well-run programs can dramatically impact infection rates.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND JUDICIARY

5. 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?

Absolutely. Hate crimes data allows MPD to allocate resources in a manner that prevents future incidents and proactively respond to pockets of escalating tension. With the dangerous uptick in violent crimes against LGBT residents, we must be vigilant that MPD is appropriately responding to, investigating, and collecting data about these incidents. I am encouraged by the outreach efforts of MPD's Gay and Lesbian Liaison Unit and its collaboration with GLOV and the DC Center - we need to utilize this expertise in a wider effort to protect our LGBT citizens.

K. R. MOA.

Protecting LGBT citizens is not solely the responsibility of the GLUU. All MPD officers must be adequately trained and competently able to respond to hate crimes and to collect relevant information while on the scene.

6. Will you support funding for MPD to hire or contract qualified trainers to provide LGBT-inclusive cultural competency training including the handling of intimate partner violence?

Yes. I will support funding for LGBT-inclusive cultural competency training and same-sex IPV response training. Training of this nature should be specifically budgeted, as MPD officers must be equipped with the interpersonal skills necessary to handle matters affecting all members of our community.

7. Will you oppose legislation to make permanent the so-called Prostitution-Free Zones (PFZs), which facilitate anti-transgender profiling, and will you vote to repeal the current PFZ law?

I am concerned about the constitutionality of Prostitution Free Zones (PFZs), but I am optimistic that the intent of PFZs is to reduce concentrations of criminal activity in notably dangerous areas of the city, and not to specifically target transgender women for discriminatory police practices. As a general matter, I am strongly in favor of containing prostitution and reducing crime that proliferates in areas where prostitution is concentrated. From a public health perspective, I also support the work of organizations like HIPS, and understand the crucial need for the harm reduction model they utilize in their services.

Crime-prevention measures and the protection of civil rights are not, and should not be, mutually exclusive. In fact, I firmly believe that we are bound by the Constitution and a sense of fundamental human morality to protect transgender citizens from violence and discrimination. As such, I will support laws that strike an appropriate balance between the concerns of public safety and civil liberties.

HUMAN RIGHTS

8. 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?

It would be ideal if the Director of the Office of Human Rights has a background in civil rights law enforcement. However, there may be candidates who have not dealt specifically with enforcement who nevertheless are qualified based on other relevant professional experience, and/or who have a degree in closely related fields of study. I believe these individuals should be considered as well. Ultimately, appointment to this critical position should be based on a candidate's experience and qualifications.

YOUTH AND SENIORS

9. 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?

I do not support using school vouchers as a means of circumventing DC's Human Rights Act (DCHRA). I do however support a parent or guardian's right to pursue the best education choice

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for his or her child, allowing them to make the decision about what is an appropriate curriculum for their child. Again, I vigorously support DCHRA and what it aims to achieve.

10. 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, I will oppose abstinence-only sex education programs, as I believe they do not equip our young people with enough information to make informed and responsible choices. I support a science-based curriculum that provides youth with meaningful options that promote a healthy, safe, and responsible lifestyle.

11. Will you support legislation to ensure equal Medicaid spousal impoverishment protections for same-sex partners, including providing local funding to pay for benefits that are denied at the federal level due to the anti-gay Defense of Marriage Act?

Yes, I will support legislation to ensure Medicaid benefits for same-sex partners. It is time to dismantle this shameful disparate treatment imposed upon our citizens by the Defense of Marriage Act, and I will lobby our delegate to Congress to hasten the repeal of this law.

CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES

12. 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, without excluding any ward?

I believe that what people do in their private lives is their business (assuming it's legal). As councilmember for Ward 5, I will ensure that adult-oriented businesses, and in particular strip clubs, are appropriately licensed, zoned and not concentrated in any one ward.

13. Will you support legislation to curb abuses involving endless series of baseless complaints to harass or extort bars and restaurants?

I will support reasonable regulations allowing businesses to maximize revenue while balancing considerations of the immediately affected neighborhood. I am concerned that the ABRA process is sometimes used by small groups of citizens to obstruct legitimate commercial enterprise. Reasonable people can disagree about the impact of an establishment with a liquor license, especially when in proximity to a residential area, but there are regulations that, if properly enforced, should mitigate the need for complaints about such establishments.

14. What will you do to provide alternatives to incarceration for marginalized and at-risk populations like homeless youth and transgender people who resort to prostitution for survival?

At-risk youth need safe housing, health care, and meaningful paths out of homelessness and prostitution. Education and targeted outreach by DOES plays a big role here, as does equipping our residents with the training, tools, skills, and knowledge to find and keep jobs. The bill introduced by Councilmember Catania that deals with wrap-around mental health services for at-risk youth is an important piece in the ongoing quest to make sure that we are doing all we can to help youth who are often starting at a disadvantage. I also applaud the Mayor's initiative to tailor the Project Empowerment program for transgender citizens.

K. McDuffie

Comprehensive services and opportunities to volunteer and/or work with organizations in the community serving at-risk populations are all a part of this equation. Additionally, we must work to ensure that the DCPS Anti-Bullying Advisory Committee has real teeth to work toward an improved, inclusive climate where bullying is no longer tolerated as the norm. To that end, the school systems' LGBTQ Steering Committee must remain at the table as a force for positive change.

Your record is part of your rating. Please list any actions that you have taken that may help illustrate your record on behalf of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

It is worth noting that I publicly supported marriage equality as a candidate in 2010 and continue to do so without any reservations. I am also a member of the Human Rights Campaign and Gertrude Stein Democratic Club. As a trial attorney for the Civil Rights Division of the US Department of Justice, I investigated nursing homes, prisons, jails and juvenile justice facilities around the country to ensure that the conditions are constitutional. One of the most important issues our office faced was protecting inmates from harm, particularly LGBT inmates who were being sexually assaulted. These attacks underscore the importance of the Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) enforcement across the country.

As an advisor to the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice, I worked with the Mayor's Office of GLBT Affairs, MPD, and GLOV to address the violent attacks against transgenders. I also worked with the Office of GLBT Affairs and MPD to coordinate the One City Summer Fun in summer 2011, which was focused on providing our youth, particularly members of the LGBT community, with constructive activities and events happening around the city rather than congregating in Gallery Place.

My campaign also represents all of Ward 5, including staff members and core volunteers from the LGBT community. I am honored to work side-by-side with members of the LGBT community to ensure that all of our residents' concerns are voiced and represented.

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