

Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, DC
2014 Questionnaire for D.C. Council Candidates
PUBLIC HEALTH

1. Will you act to ensure that the District provides transgender-inclusive health insurance to all D.C. Government employees, to include coverage for sex affirmation surgery (also known as sex reassignment surgery)?

Employees should be able to use their health funds in a flexible manner. Funding for health and cosmetic surgery should be equal for each individual with no further political and bureaucratic discretion exercised over such choices.

2. Will you support budgets that target funds to address health disparities in the LGBT population, including in mental health and substance abuse treatment?

There should be no government discrimination on the basis of sexual preference with respect to resources offered for mental health and substance abuse treatment. The government is responsible for ensuring that treatment is successful according to reasonable standards of care, and not an ineffective panacea.

3. Will you support reforming the medical marijuana law and regulations to delete the outdated list of qualifying conditions and rely instead on a physician's diagnosis of medical needs?

Political considerations should not come between patients and physicians, and treatment must be based on individualized need which can vary considerably due to biology and which does not lend itself to bureaucratic decision-making.

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

I would apply my professional background in statistical operational improvement to prioritize and focus attention on areas needing the most improvement. This could take the form of improvements in processes and policies. At present I do not have a priori knowledge of which areas need the most improvement, nor of the best policies to pursue in each case. Holding opinions without facts, though commonplace, is not a virtue for any politician.

JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

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?

The MPD should treat all violent crime effectively in the same way. I would work to ensure objective police collection of statistics and treatment of crime. As members of the Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender community sometimes carry weapons to protect themselves from hate crimes, I

would seek ways to ensure the protection afforded by 2nd amendment rights which were affirmed by the Supreme Court.

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

Humans own their own bodies. Incarceration of sex workers is a violation of human rights. Sex work must be decriminalized, freeing workers to seek the assistance of police if needed. Criminal records of sex workers should be expunged.

7. Will you support funding to hire qualified trainers to provide LGBT-inclusive cultural competency training to all police officers, including in the handling of intimate partner violence?

Police must be trained to serve all their constituencies. I would seek to ensure adequate funding for this purpose and effectiveness of this training.

HUMAN RIGHTS

8. Will you insist that anyone appointed as Director of the Office of Human Rights be required to have professional training and experience in civil rights law enforcement?

No one in public service can be permitted to discriminate on the basis of their personal preferences, and those applying the law must be trained to respect all their constituents. I prefer to call it training and experience in individual rights.

9. Given the limited results from trans-inclusive Project Empowerment training, will you push to establish a project at the Department of Employment Services to increase government hiring from under-represented populations, including the chronically underemployed trans population?

I would seek to understand whether there is a pattern of discrimination by government agencies and whether better qualified trans candidates were denied employment in favor of lesser qualified non-trans candidates. Being trans has nothing to do with job performance. Only the qualifications of the individual matters, and if the government is not hiring the best candidate, it is stealing from taxpayers. Due to the unique challenges faced by the trans population, extra oversight would seem warranted.

YOUTH AND SENIOR

10. Will you support improved services and treatment for LGBT homeless youth and seniors, including transitional housing?

Yes, I would support transfer of unused DC buildings to non-profits for use as transitional housing, and ease regulatory burdens to make it easier for non-profits to offer improved services and treatment than is typical for government to provide.

CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES

11. Will you support strengthening Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) reforms by eliminating license protests filed by citizens associations and ad hoc groups requiring stakeholders to participate in the community process provided by the Advisory Neighborhood Commission?

I would likely eliminate the ABC and have police restrict only specific activities which infringe on the rights or property of others.

12. Will you defend 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. In general, society should permit the maximum degree of individual freedom and free expression, and the state has no right to interfere with consenting adult associations or entertainment preferences in private.

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, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people.

I have supported gay political candidates including Bruce Majors, and in my private life, have supported the rights of gay individuals. I look forward to continuing this support in my public position on the City Council representing Ward 6.