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GLAA 2014 Questionnaire

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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)? **YES**

I believe that transgender residents should have the right to quality insurance that includes the coverage of the full range of transgender health needs including the cost of hormonal treatment and sex affirmation surgery for D.C. government employees. Further, this right should be expanded to all businesses and non-profits in the District that offer health insurance coverage.

As a member of both the Human Services and Health Committees, I have met with the leadership of DC Health Link (Obamacare) and insurance providers asking them to provide this full coverage for transgender residents.

Further, the current system of insurance companies using "exclusionary clauses" to prohibit coverage of hormonal treatment, and needed surgeries should be deemed invalid and in violation of our Human Rights laws.

Appropriately, in February 2014, our executive Mayor Vincent Gray and the Department of Insurance of Securities and Exchange, with support from the council and the community mandated the most comprehensive coverage in the nation when it comes to providing transgender residents with health insurance citing nondiscrimination as I mentioned in my previous response submission.

Similarly, I am preparing to introduce legislation that would require insurance providers to offer coverage for lap band surgery. Although this is for the general population, the extended coverage would be a great health benefit to many in the LGBTQ community who suffer from morbid obesity.



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

The health of the District and our residents is dependent on fully funded budgets that recognize the different needs of our diverse populations. The budgets must be developed to target these communities and their disparities, including the LGBTQ community by addressing their unique physical and mental health needs in an effective manner.

Improved data collection will help facilitate the distribution of these targeted funds and I fully agree that DOH should include transgender residents in their health report and list sexual orientation and gender identity as risk factors when compiling data.

Also, I would include combating cigarette smoking in the LGBTQ community within substance abuse funding as a responsible use for targeted funding.

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? **YES**

In the past, DC's limited list of 4 conditions to be able to qualify for a prescription of medical marijuana was a factor in the dismal participation of the District's medical marijuana program and their dispensaries. However, in 2014, I along with my colleagues unanimously passed legislation that expanded the list of conditions. This was the right thing to do and I fully support following the advice of medical professionals so that those who have HIV, cancer and other terminal diseases will receive what science has proven as a beneficial treatment.

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.

The District should be commended for the large reduction of newly infections and for maintaining one of the most aggressive testing and treatment programs in the country but I still remain equally alarmed at the prevalence of the high rate of infection of HIV, especially within our African American community. Only through prompt testing, education and extended treatment analysis and management will we truly reduce the epidemic HIV rates in the District.

As a member of the Committee on Health, I have worked with Chairman Alexander to increase funding for these needed programs to administer increased testing and prevention efforts through public advocacy campaigns, and have supported targeted campaigns aimed towards high risk populations including seniors and teens and I consider wrap around services, including depression and mental health services, an integral component of successfully improving a patient's overall health.



We successfully were able to give DOH authority to administer \$1.5M in grants towards HIV prevention and intervention programs in FY15

I fully support anonymous standardized HIV/STD testing in government run health care centers and agencies and will avail my efforts to encourage private companies to follow suit. A strong educational campaign concerning the symptoms and treatment of HIV for providers and patients combined with continued distribution and availability of condoms and clean needles will help us to curb these rates. (Aside: The Anita Bonds contingent in the 2013 Capital Pride Parade handed out 5,000 condoms to show my commitment to encouraging safe sex behavior)

However, hope is on the horizon. Studies have shown that taking Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis as a preventive measure that can reduce HIV infection by 90+%. Following established CDC guidelines, HAHSTA needs to create a new PrEP division to address, educate and retain those, especially in high risk groups to take this preventive measure. I would be willing to be a spokesperson.

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? **YES**

As a member of the Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety, I remain concerned with the process MPD uses to record and publicize crime statistic data. I was advised that a system was in place that would release data, including hate crimes, on a monthly basis is no longer routine or accurate because reported and recorded hate crimes were classified as "unsupported hate crimes." I encourage our MPD to collaborate with the US Attorney's office and pertinent organizations such as GLOV to publicize LGBT-related hate crime, trans bias, and same sex Domestic Violence statistics (supported and unsupported) monthly. Further, we should not have to wait a year for a report to be published but this data should be made available online monthly for transparency.

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?

I fully supported and voted for the repeal of Prostitution Free Zones, which will help many from being saddled with a criminal record. However, I want to take this further. As a member of the Judiciary and Public Safety Committee, I believe that the time is right for the District government to consider amending the criminal penalties of prostitution and sex work related crimes to civil penalties. Similar to our recent decriminalization of marijuana possession, many in the sex work industry are unfairly condemned and have difficulty finding employment when branded with a criminal record. Decriminalization of sex work would help provide greater opportunities for many and will also relieve our justice and

incarceration system of the burden of processing and housing these non-violent offenders.

Unemployment of transgender people and youth remain unacceptably high. We must double our efforts and build upon the successes of programs like Casa de Ruby and the DOES job training initiative to offer alternatives to those that have been marginalized from society.

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? **YES**

The MPD's duty is to protect all the people, regardless of differences and I believe we must fund these needed programs to erase the stigma and misperceptions of the LGBTQ community. We cannot just accept sensitivity training to occur yearly or when a new cadet joins the force. We must dedicate specific funding to allow a greater rate of officers trained as opposed to the current small percentage of our 4,000 member force. This training should apply for all government employees that serve the public, including Fire/EMS, DMV, DCRA, etc.

We also need to make funds available to continue the training in the field, not just in the classroom. This will allow the instructors to monitor police adherence and behavior and help ensure that crimes are properly documented and victims are treated respectfully.

This can be easily facilitated with funding directly from the Mayor's Office of LGBT Affairs utilizing experienced quality trainers and service providers.

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? **YES**

DC's strong human rights laws need a Director with a background of understanding, upholding, and enforcing the law's protections of our diverse populace. My expectations are that the Director will work with the Mayor, the Office of LGBT Affairs, and the Director of Human Resources to ensure that all government agencies are compliant in awareness of the protected categories.

Additionally, all employees of and Human Rights Commission members should be required to have cultural and sensitivity training.

Further, the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs should include a brochure of DCHRA laws and protections to all entities that register with the District.



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? **YES**

Mayor Vincent Gray is to be commended for establishing the nation's first job training and placement program for transgender residents. Not only does the program offer needed skills and training for employment but it sends a clear affirming message to our trans population that we accept and value their participation in government and society.

However, the District Government needs to build on this successful beginning and proactively seek and employ qualified transgender individuals. Every agency and the DC Council should commit to transgender affirmative action goals and I call on our new Mayor to establish a city-wide transgender hiring policy.

YOUTH AND SENIORS

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

With the growing increase of homeless families and individuals in the District of Columbia, it is natural that the number of homeless LGBT seniors and youth are also increasing. Therefore, greater enforcement of nondiscrimination policies and sensitivity training must be provided for service providers and their employees. The DC Department of Human Services should have dedicated staff to monitor and report on compliance.

Additionally, housing that is obtainable by all is of major importance to the continued viability and diversity of DC. Discrimination in housing is a federal offence that as a Member of the Council I'll work to enforce whenever violations are found.

Additionally, I was proud to co-sponsor the "LGBTQ HOMELESS YOUTH REFORM ACT OF 2013," which will identify the true population of homeless LGBT youth in the District and will require the Interagency Council on Homelessness to identify and provide the needed resources to this population as part of their annual plan. Additionally the legislation will require the establishment of a minimum number of beds for homeless LGBTQ youth. This legislation will also provide the Office of LGBT Affairs with the needed grant making authority to make this possible.

Further, I was fully supportive of Councilmember Mary Cheh's successful effort to obtain nearly \$1 million dollars in additional funding for homeless LGBT youth.

Following 2013's establishment of the Wanda Alston House Foundation, I've had several conversations and have offered my assistance for the Wanda Alston House



Foundation to utilize these funds and open a 2nd location that would serve overnight homeless LGBT youth.

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? **YES**

I understand the process of liquor licensing approval and believe an Ad Hoc group of 5 does not appropriately reflect the views of a community.

As a former four-term ANC Chairperson, I believe the ANC's decisions must have greater consideration, because they are elected to act on behalf of their constituents in their neighborhood where the license is to be considered.

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**

I always try to defend the rights of individuality, and therefore the rights of businesses. We must extend all efforts to support and welcome businesses that operate legally, adult-oriented businesses included. At the neighborhood level, I'll work to find appropriate locations for adult-oriented businesses, perhaps, away from schools.

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. 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 Thursday, February 6th.

I have fought for over 45 years to end discrimination as a civil rights and women's rights activist and naturally, I aligned this commitment to advancing LGBTQ equality. This comes natural for me to stand up for the rights of my friends, as they stood up for me, an African American woman. I recently went to the wedding of Richard Maulsby and Richard LaFonte and realized how far we've advanced LGBT rights from our early days of activism.

I returned to the District after attending UC Berkeley in the 60's and within years was working with LGBT individuals in all arenas of economic and social justice, one of the first was fighting for gays to remain teachers. I attended my first Gertrude Stein meeting in 1978 and remain active still. I supported adding sexual orientation as a protected class around the same time. I was instrumental in having Mayor Marion Barry appoint the first openly gay employees in District government, I comforted loved ones as they lay dying of AIDS in the 80's, I supported and helped advance Gay and Lesbian rights, domestic partnerships and civil unions in the 90's, I encouraged the creation of and held direct oversight of the DC Office of LGBT Affairs while serving as the Director of Community Affairs for Mayor



Anthony Williams. I fully supported and passed resolutions in support of adoption rights and marriage equality as Chair of the DC Democratic Party. I support transgender rights today.

My dear close friends, the many open employees I've hired, the meetings, parades, marches, and the protests- I have been there throughout and will continue to be there.

As a Member of the Council, I was proud to:

Work with the DC Department of Corrections to institute a program that offered voluntary HIV/AIDS/STD testing upon release from the DC Jail.

Co-Introduce,


- **B20-343 "Expedited Partner Therapy Act of 2013"**

Co-Sponsor

- **B20-32 "Surrogacy Parenting Agreement Act of 2013"**
- **B20-475 "Domestic Partnership Termination Recognition Amendment Act of 2013"**
- **B20-501 "Conversion Therapy for Minors Prohibition Amendment Act of 2013"**
- **B20-417 "Sexual Assault Victims' Rights Amendment Act of 2013"**
- **B20-51 "LGBTQ Homeless Youth Reform Act of 2013"**
- **B20-35 "Domestic Violence Hotline Establishment Act of 2013"**

And support:

- **B20-461 "Marriage Licensing Issuance Amendment Act of 2013"**


**Sincerely,
Anita Bonds**

