

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)?

Yes, sex affirmation surgery is not cosmetic and is recognized as medically necessary by every major medical organization.

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 LGBT community is huge part of the D.C. culture. Our budget should include funds to address health disparities and serve the LGBT community, with mental health, substance abuse treatment, transitional housing, and long term care.

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 Will you support reforming the medical marijuana law and regulations to delete the outdated list of qualifying conditions and rely instead on a physician's diagnosis of medical needs?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, as we move forward in our medical marijuana program that Council members Mendelson and Catania have presented, we must continue to build upon our success. I will support reforming the medical marijuana law and regulation to delete the outdated list and have physician's diagnose the medical need. Policymakers cannot keep up with the changes in medicine, physicians are more up to date with the current list of qualifying conditions.

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.

HAHSTA has done a great job getting people tested, with the latest report showing a grade of A. Once a person is tested, they can obtain treatment and the risk of transmission is reduced.

As Councilmember, I will ensure:

- 1) All communities are targeted (e.g. sex workers, LGBT, Latinos, African American, women, seniors, etc.) to ensure they receive education, testing, and treatment
- 2) Maintain condom distribution in non-profits organizations
- 3) Every community has a prevention program that appeals to that specific community such as DC Center and Casa Ruby



- 4) Create partnerships with local schools and universities to spread the word
- 5) Invest in technology that can track and monitor the progression of the epidemic
- 6) Use all forms of social media to educate the community
- 7) Hold webinars online with specialists and leaders of the community to inform the public of the services provided and where they can go in the community to receive help

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, the Council and public need more accuracy within the data of related hate crime collected. We could make heavier police efforts in certain locations deemed dangerous and look for opportunities for intervention, prior to them becoming a crime. Data collection is essential in order to know the extent of the trends in bias-related crimes. We must focus on training MPD officers to ensure that reporting and response to criminal activity is made a priority.

As Councilmember, I will ensure

- 1) that MDP officers can efficiently and quickly complete a report
- 2) victims can easily file a crime through a hotline, email, or community base non-profit organization
- 3) hire MPD officers that are part of the LGBT community

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?

My platform is based on helping at-risk students, because I was a former at-risk student who turned my life around. One of my first legislation proposals to present to the council if elected is my Kids After-school Program plan to fund additional after-school programs. After-school programs are essential for helping kids be in a safe environment from 3pm to 8pm. During my service as a mentor, I met with many LGBT homeless youth who did not have a place to go after-school or a safe place to sleep. As council member, I would work hard to fund and provide additional transitional housing like the Wanda Alston House or Casa Ruby, education, job training, mental health services, and counseling. If we could provide youth with role models, mentors, and a safe environment, they can achieve extraordinary things. No one should have to resort to prostitution for survival, we need to find ways of preventing the circumstances that lead a person to think that prostitution is their only option. I always believe that when society has failed us, our politics should lift us up and give us opportunities. Find my after school program here: <http://www.rubioforDC.com/vision>

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



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intimate partner violence?

Yes, our Fire and Emergency Medical Services personnel should be trained to respond to the needs of the LGBT community as well. The Metropolitan Police Department must be trained to handle all calls, especially those of same-sex domestic violence.

As Councilmember, I will:

- 1) Hire public safety responders from the LGBT community. It is easier to talk to someone who relates to you.
- 2) Ensure that training is part of the curriculum.
- 3) Ensure that bias behavior of police officers be investigated and dealt with quickly.
- 4) Provide transitional housing for same-sex domestic violence victims. This is key, because domestic violence victims stay with their abuser because they don't have anywhere to go, providing transitional housing for them and their family is key.

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, anyone appointed as Director of the Office of Human Rights must have a specialization in civil rights law enforcement. The OHR director makes judgment calls on personal and emotional nature of discrimination. This is an important role and we must select someone with the experience and knowledge to make these calls. Any position within the D.C. government should be based on experience and qualifications.

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?

The D.C. government employee demographic lacks representation of many communities such as the transgender, Latinos, and youth. As part of the board for the DC Latino Caucus we have asked our government officials the same question regarding Latino employment in the DC government. Latinos make up 10% of the population but only 2% of the workforce is Latino. Many candidates won't provide a clear answer because there are many parts to this question.

- 1) It starts from the top with leadership and who they want on their staff or elect as Directors of Departments.
- 2) To obtain a DC government job is a political game that must be stopped. People should obtain jobs because they are qualified, and not because of political ties.
- 3) Train our underrepresented communities for jobs within the DC government.



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YOUTH AND SENIORS

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

Yes, I am a huge fan of fast transitional housing for all homeless youth, seniors, and domestic violence victims. It should be a safe environment, where they can get job training, education, counseling, recovery programs, support, and food. We must provide more drop-in centers, I will strongly support this and help with this effort.

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 believe everyone's voice should be heard, and sometimes your Advisory Neighborhood Commission does not share your same beliefs. People should be able to gather and be heard. As councilmember, I want to hear everyone's concern before I vote on a legislation. No one's voice should be left unheard.

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. If the land-swap deal happens for the soccer stadium it will displace gay-related establishments. Similar to what the Nationals Stadium did when it moved in. Businesses will have a hard time to move to other locations due to regulation and the cost of real estate. I would propose a bill similar to the "One Time-Relocation of Licensees Displaced by The Ballpark Amendment Act of 2006" to help these establishments to communities where they can reach their demographic. And Yes, I believe adults have the right to choose what is best and appropriate for themselves.

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 6 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) to equal@glaa.org. Thank you.



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Statement by Pedro Rubio

My passion for serving the community is based on my beliefs that everyone should be treated as I would want to be treated. My experience with the LGBT community started in high school when a classmate of mine announced he was gay. I always defended him from kids who were bullying him. We became friends and things got a lot better for him in school. As a person, I felt that no one should be discriminated because of who they are. I promise myself that I would always stand up for what was right and help others. As a Latino, I know first hand how it feels to be discriminated against, and no one should go through that. My years of work within the community shows my commitment to serving those in need. **I pledge** to stand in solidarity with the LGBT community and individuals to address hate crimes, discrimination, and provide LGBT the proper services.

Related:

- Member of the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club
- Treasurer and Board Member of the DC Latino Caucus where 3 of 12 board members are part of the LGBT community, we have raised the issues of hate crimes against gay Latinos in recent years
- Serve as a mentor to a gay student that was on probation from the D.C. Court System through Georgetown University after-school program



Signed: Pedro G. Rubio Jr.

