

Muriel Bowser's Response to the Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, DC's 2014 Questionnaire for D.C. Mayoral 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)?

According to the Human Rights Campaign's white paper on transgender inclusive health insurance, 25% of all Fortune 100 companies now offer insurance that covers sex affirmation. In 2008, the American Medical Association passed a resolution supporting this as well. As part of my commitment to recruiting and retaining the best possible workforce, the Bowser administration will look for health insurance providers who offer cost effective transgender-inclusive health insurance policies.

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

I agree with the findings of the 2010 LGBT health report and other federal reports that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender residents face health disparities. I am aware it is difficult to collecting necessary data on these populations to develop the correct budgets and programs.

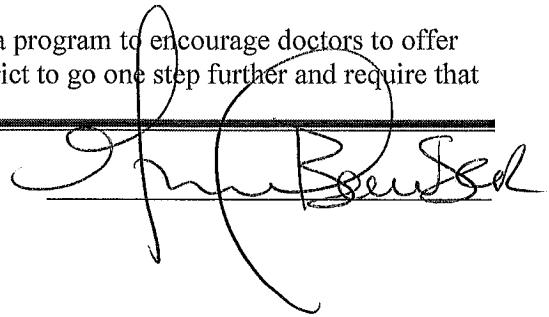
Approximately 65% of the Department of Health's budget is federally funded. I will continue to commit local funds to the prevention and spread of HIV/AIDS and STIs, and expand the scope of existing programming to classify those who identify themselves as part of the larger LGBTQ community among those with health disparities. This will make it easier for organizations supporting LGBT specific health prevention programs to qualify for funding.

Currently, the District of Columbia spends \$200 million in local funds to provide mental health and substance abuse treatment to District residents through a network of agencies that are reimbursed for the delivery of these services. The Bowser administration will monitor the federal budget and aggressively apply for any funds that can be used to address the health disparities in the LGBT community.

3. 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 will first review the HAHSTA Director's performance to determine if the Director's performance, leadership and vision are in consonance with mine. If not, I will find the best person to fill that position.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) created a program to encourage doctors to offer HIV testing as part of routine care. One proposal is for the District to go one step further and require that



all primary care doctors offer regular HIV testing and fine those who don't participate. The funds raised by these fines would go to educational programs for doctors on how to implement these programs. Routine HIV testing is important because up to 20% of all HIV positive people don't know their status and 33% of newly diagnosed patients acquire AIDS within the first year.

The District needs to adopt an aggressive treatment and care model that will get HIV patients on life saving anti-retroviral drugs as soon as possible. The CDC recommends that patients start taking medication when their CD4 cell count drops below 500 cells per microliter. A recent study in San Francisco estimated that new infection rates could be cut up to 75% if patients begin treatment as soon as they become infected.

Additional research is necessary to study the long term efficacy of treatment on demand as a prevention strategy as well as the interrelation of HIV and hepatitis. Whitman Walker Clinic participates in several cutting edge programs but more information is needed about health challenges facing long-term patients living with HIV. New medications and therapies have been life savers but we need to be able to provide adequate life-long care.

I will also focus on the implementation of the Healthy Schools Act, by working closely with OSSE and the State Charter Board to produce and implement an immediate action plan.

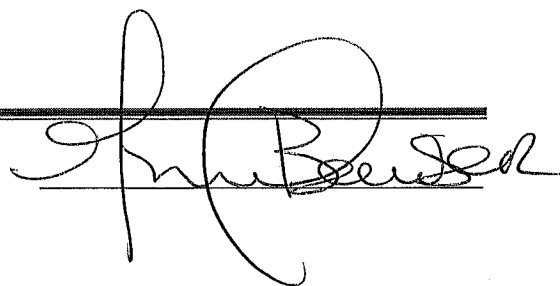
Effective surveillance is impossible without data. To this end, I will order an assessment of HAHSTA databases and the tools HAHSTA uses to collect, analyze and manage its data. As part of this assessment, I will also direct the HAHSTA Director to continue efforts to effectively communicate with key stakeholders and providers to discover shortcomings in HAHSTA technology that need to be resolved. I will then work with the HAHSTA Director to implement the findings of the assessment with the goal of using technology to improve surveillance and to reduce the amount of time our providers spend with grant compliance.

JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

4. Will you require the Metropolitan Police Department's gathering and analysis of crime statistics to ensure greater comprehensiveness and objectivity, including on LGBT-related hate crimes and intimate partner violence?

Yes. I will direct the Metropolitan Police Department to continue collecting data on all hate crimes including those that target people because of their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. Additionally, I will comply with the law and ensure an annual hate crimes report is released.

Also, I will encourage MPD to develop a report that tracks intimate partner violence incidents indexed by sexual orientation and continue to work with community stakeholders to ensure all data collection is as comprehensive as possible.



5. 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?

People want to work. People need jobs. The best alternative to incarceration is to provide viable alternatives to criminal activity. I will expand job training programs for youth and replicate best practices to combat homeless among at-risk and transgender youth. I have already introduced legislation to expand the Summer Youth Employment Program and year-round youth job programs to age 24. I will also work with the DCPS Chancellor to retain and return at-risk and transgender youth. I have been very focal about stopping bullying in our schools. Additionally, the Bowser administration will work with the DC Courts system on appropriate alternative sentences.

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

Yes. I will continue to fund programs that provide LGBT cultural competency training to Metropolitan Police Department personnel. Additionally, I will ensure that all training modules around intimate partner violence contain information on how to effectively handle Intimate Partner and Domestic Partner Violence calls involving same-sex partners.

HUMAN RIGHTS

7. Will you require that anyone you appoint as Director of the Office of Human Rights have professional training and experience in civil rights law enforcement?

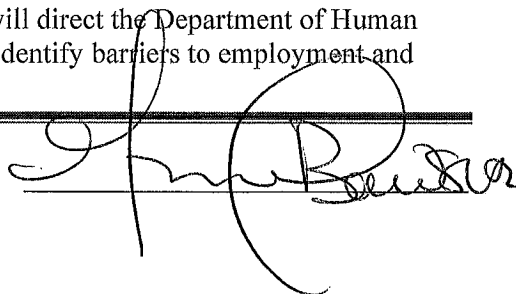
The Bowser administration will attract the best and brightest to each position. We will look for candidates who are thought leaders and innovators in their fields. Accordingly, professional training and experience in civil rights law will be a major qualification for the Director of OHR.

8. Will you renew, enforce and update as necessary the Mayoral Order mandating explicit inclusion of every class protected under the D.C. Human Rights Act in all D.C. government agency nondiscrimination statements?

Yes. I will also instruct all Agency Directors to comply with the order.

9. Given the limited results from trans-inclusive Project Empowerment training, will you establish a project at the Department of Employment Services to increase government hiring from under-represented populations, and will you hire trans persons in your own office?

Unemployment for transgender residents is unacceptably high. I will direct the Department of Human Resources to conduct a thorough review of our hiring practices to identify barriers to employment and



possibly create a pilot program to increase hiring from all under-represented populations. In addition, my administration will develop cultural competency training programs for all employers in the city and work with city-funded job programs to encourage increased outreach to under-represented communities.

The Bowser administration will attract the best and brightest to each position. We will look for candidates who are thought leaders and innovators in their fields. Transgender people are welcome and I look forward to hiring qualified applicants in my office. We will increase outreach efforts to the transgender community, ensuring that they are aware of government opportunities. Our administration will reflect the District of Columbia.

YOUTH AND SENIORS

10. Will you act to ensure improved services and treatment for LGBT homeless youth and seniors, including expanding transitional housing and emergency shelter space?

Yes. One of my prouder accomplishments on the Council was co-sponsoring a bill that provides additional resources to LGBT homeless youth. I will implement the recommendations from the legislation and look for additional innovative ways to reduce youth homelessness. My focus will be on providing permanent supportive housing units that will allow youth to obtain the needed supportive services.

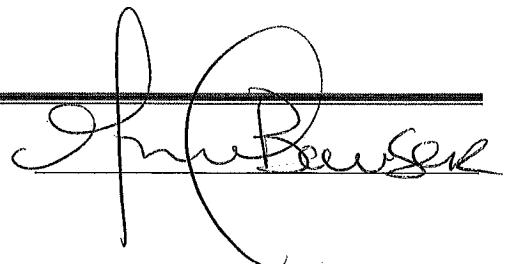
LGBT seniors are a truly forgotten demographic. Many are dealing with the same issues other senior Washingtonians deal with, including increasing property taxes, and wanting to age in place in houses they have called home for decades in our city. Unlike others, LGBT senior citizens may not have married a long-term partner. When one partner dies, the surviving partner is left without survivor benefits. I will also work to ensure that all senior programs receive appropriate cultural competency training. All District senior citizens must have access to appropriate housing.

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?

Advisory Neighborhood Commissions play a vital role in our city. I am not inclined to limit their ability to protest licenses. An establishment that holds a liquor license has an obligation to work with the community to ensure reasonable peace, order and quiet. However, I will work with ABRA to ensure that community demands do not pose an unreasonable hardship on any business.

The Council recently passed comprehensive changes to our ABRA laws, which I supported. I supported some limitation on citizens' association and Group of 5 protests, but continue to think they lend value to the process.



12. Do you pledge to find a suitably located space for The DC Center when the Reeves Center closes?

To be clear, I do not support trading away the Reeves Center as part of an ill-defined land swap. Should the need arise, however, the Bowser administration will pledge to work with the DC Center to find a suitable location.

Record of Support for the LGBT community.

I am privileged to represent Ward 4 on the Council of the District of Columbia, and I am proud of my past support from GLAA. I am running for Mayor of Washington, DC because I believe we need a fresh start in the mayor's office. As mayor, I look forward to working to create a city that grows and protects our diversity, speeds up school reform, provides good-paying jobs, and returns honesty to government. The LGBTQ community will have a seat at the table. I will make you DC Proud.

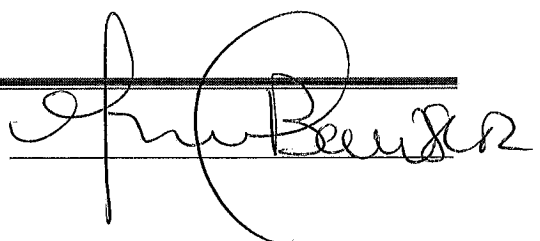
I have long supported the LGBT community. I have voted in favor of every piece of LGBT-friendly legislation that has come before the Council.

I co-introduced the LGBTQ Homeless Youth Reform Act that will help address some of the challenges faced by LGBT homeless youth. This bill unanimously passed the Council, and is currently awaiting the Mayor's signature.

As Chair of the Committee on Libraries, Parks and Recreation, I helped to draft and pass legislation that led to the creation of a centralized system to address bullying.

I co-sponsored and proudly voted for the JaParker Deoni Jones Birth Certificate Equality Amendment Act of 2013.

I was extremely proud to cast an historic vote for marriage equality in the District of Columbia.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Muriel Bowser", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.