

Tommy Wells
For Mayor

Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, DC 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)?

Yes. As recently as January 17, a federal appeals court for Massachusetts upheld a ruling to grant a prisoner a sex change operation calling medically necessary treatment a constitutional right that must be protected. The court decision found that Massachusetts Department of Corrections violated her Eighth Amendment right to be free from "cruel and unusual punishment."

The District must do no less. Anything other than full coverage is no more than illegal discrimination. Further, I will ask the insurance commissioner to end any exclusion of transgender health needs from insurance plans offered in the District, and ensure that no plan offered as part of the medical care exchange in the District omit any medically necessary procedure.

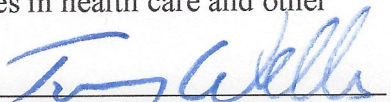
2. Will you submit budgets that target funds to address health disparities in the LGBT population, including in mental health and substance abuse treatment?

Yes. The disparities are apparently due to 1) a lack of health insurance due to employment discrimination. D.C.'s recent expansion of medical insurance, and the Affordable Care Act, should allow for people without employment to receive health insurance. We still need to ensure that the Human Rights Act's prohibition on employment discrimination—among its other provisions—is vigorously enforced.

2) Stigma. Again, this goes to vigorous enforcement of the Human Rights Act, implementation of the anti-bullying law, and continued work to train all District employees in cultural sensitivity. Coming out is ultimately the most effective thing that can be done, but that is not a function of the Mayor or the government. The Mayor and government must ensure that it is as easy as possible for people to come out.

3) Cultural competency of medical care givers. In the District, we are conducting regular cultural competency trainings for District employees that must continue and expand. All care givers must understand the law and live up to it.

Gay, lesbian, and bisexual people probably face less discrimination and gaps in service than they used to. We need appropriate data to be sure. Transgender people no doubt face more discrimination and have larger service gaps than many other groups in the District. I believe that this group of people, among others, should be targeted for disparities in health care and other


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aspects of their lives. Eliminating the exclusion of health care treatments, including sex affirmation surgery, should help bring more transgender people into the health care system and provide more preventative services. Reducing employment and other forms of discrimination will also help close the gaps. Violence perpetrated against transgender people is also a significant factor in health disparities. Ending this violence will become a priority in my administration. The lack of reliable and timely data is disturbing. That needs to be corrected and an annual LGBT health report needs to be completed each year without fail. Whether the obstacle is funding or leadership, I will ensure that such a report is published.

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.

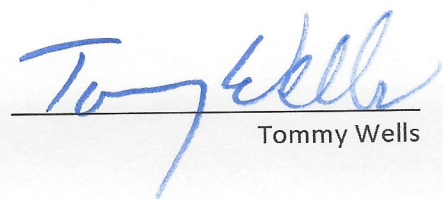
DC Applesseed's 8th report card on HIV/AIDS in the Nation's Capital gives us a blue print for changes that are needed. While I won't be satisfied until we have all A's, the C's should be high priorities for correction. Fortunately, we didn't receive any lower grades.

Monitoring and evaluation is basic to understanding the extent and spread of the virus. The four-year lag in making the DC Public Health Information System, formerly Maven, to include HIV is unacceptable. The system is critical in making decisions, "...greatly simplifying and improving data collection, analysis, and reporting."

It is unclear if the database is unready due to a lack of funds or lack of leadership. Either way, I will rectify the problem and get the database to include HIV/AIDS.

Public Education has fallen under the Mayor's control so the outcomes in the schools are due in large part to the policies and their implementation by his staff. The Office of the State Superintendent of Education has fallen short in its responsibility to implement the Healthy Schools Act and provide age appropriate curriculum on HIV/AIDS to students in the District.

Housing is the third item to receive a C. People living with HIV/AIDS must have stable housing. With a fully funded Housing Production Trust Fund, we can make "Housing Opportunities for People with AIDS" (HOPWA) a priority. We will likely need to add funding to meet the need. We should not be warehousing people in motels in Maryland as we do now. That is wasteful of resources and does not create the stability that people without homes need.


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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. As Chair of the Council's Judiciary and Public Safety Committee, I have made both anti-GLBT violence and domestic violence a priority.

I introduced B20-0035, Domestic Violence Hotline bill, which passed in the fiscal year 2014 budget.

It required Office of Victim Services to establish a task force, which Director Melissa Hook has done, in order to:

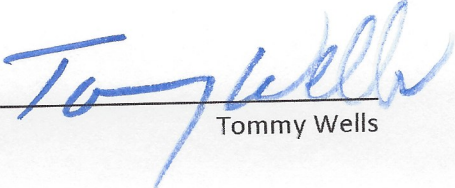
- Assess the staff and technology needs of a public domestic hotline and develop mechanisms for administration;
- Develop standards that coincide with the standards and procedures for referring victims for crisis intervention used by the existing domestic violence first responder line, operated by DC SAFE; and
- Requires the task force to develop a report by February 28, 2014, that includes the results of these assessments and developments.

The basic requirements of the hotline include that it must be a direct, toll-free number that accepts calls and text messages on a 24-hour basis, and it must provide live assistance by domestic violence counselors. It will launch at the start of fiscal year 2015. Hopefully, this will help improve statistics on domestic violence. The hotline will be open to everyone, including same-sex domestic partners.

I will ensure that MPD take accurate reports and provide statistics reliably. We cannot know how to allocate resources and deploy officers without accurate information.

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?

We must provide wrap-around services for people who engage in prostitution for survival. Drop-in centers, transitional housing, immigration assistance, job training and other educational programs, counseling, addiction recovery programs, mental health services, and STD testing and treatment are all needed services. The District needs to reach out to sex workers to provide these services.


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The French Parliament recently passed a bill to increase fines for people paying for sex, but removed criminal penalties for prostitutes. Treating prostitutes as victims in need of support may be more effective than trying to arrest them and then provide services under duress. This is an option we should study.

Homeless youth need housing and stability first and foremost. Programs like the Wanda Alston House are ideal for providing opportunities for youth. Transgender people need to options for employment, housing, and other services.

I will create a diversion program for sex workers designed to provide the safety net needed to end prostitution as the best option available. A criminal history is of no use in getting helping people leave prostitution. Other options must be available for sex workers, and police, prosecutors, and judges to use instead of the criminal justice system. We need to start seeing prostitutes as victims of circumstance, rather than perpetrators of crime.

While there is not advantage for residents having prostitution in their neighborhood, ending the quality of life issues should not be at the expense of someone else's quality of life.

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?

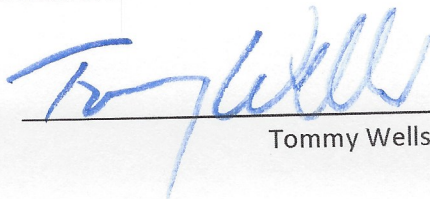
Yes, I will support funding for mandatory lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender sensitivity and diversity training for all members of the Metropolitan Police Department and the Fire and Emergency Medical Services Department. Every resident has the right to be treated with respect and concern by police and emergency personnel, and leaders of both forces must be vigilant to assure that all officers have the knowledge and sensitivity to do so.

Sensitivity training has proven to be an effective way to assure that public safety personnel understand the diversity of the communities they serve, and are equipped to provide compassionate and effective service. Good discipline requires regular training, and I will support such programs in future appropriations.

HUMAN RIGHTS

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

Yes, I agree that the Director of the Office of Human Rights should be required to have professional training and experience in civil rights law enforcement.


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Mayor Gray has nominated Monica Palacio to be the Director of the Office of Human Rights, The Committee on the Judiciary and Public Safety, which I chair, will hold a public hearing on PR20-567, the Office Of Human Rights Monica Palacio Confirmation Resolution of 2013. Ms. Palacio has a JD and has served as a commissioner on the Human Rights Commission. I will appreciate your testimony on her confirmation.

As Mayor, I will only appoint a Director of Human Rights with professional training and experience in civil rights law enforcement.

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, as every Mayor has done since Marion Barry's first term, I will reissue the order 2011-155, "Uniform Language in D.C. Government Anti-Discrimination Issuances and Equal Employment Opportunity Notices." This should be reissued at the beginning of every term, and with updates any time the Human Rights Act is updated. I will assign a staff member to review documents for the statement, and I will appreciate your help in identifying anything that we miss.

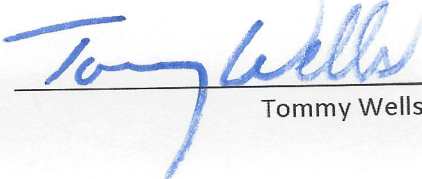
The uniform notice is as a regular reminder to both residents and government employees of what the human rights law is, and what their responsibilities are under the law.

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?

Yes. I will hire a transgender person in my administration. I will also nominate qualified transgender people to Boards and Commissions beyond the Human Rights Commission.

As mayor, I will train our workers, get them into jobs and demand enforcement of our wage laws once they are hired. Specifically I will:

- Create Department of Labor: I will create a Department of Labor that does nothing but enforce our labor and wage laws. I'll make sure that all workers are paid minimum wage and sick pay, and will demand that all city contractors hire DC workers under our First Source law.


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- **Create Workforce Commission:** The highest workforce development official is currently a Deputy Director of DOES—that's not a city that prioritizes its workforce. I will create the first Director of Workforce and hold this person accountable to get our job seekers trained and into jobs.
- **Create Cross-Agency, Outcomes-Based Workforce Budget:** As mayor, I'll plan and budget our workforce development silos (e.g. DOES job training, TANF, UDC-CC) in coordination to get our job seekers into jobs. I'll drive our workforce investments using a first-ever profile of the barriers to employment faced by residents. This critical profile will integrate the in-take assessments conducted by our One-Stops and DHS. I'll put in place common outcome metrics for all workforce development silos that measure their ability to remove barriers to employment, to place people in jobs and to help them retain jobs.
- **Create a program targeting populations that face difficulties getting hired, including transgender people, to ensure the employment gaps are narrowed, if not closed.**

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?

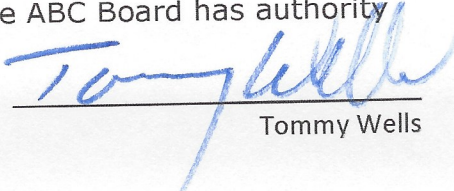
Yes. I was a cosponsor, and I voted for the LGBTQ Homeless Youth Reform Amendment Act of 2013, Bill 20-51. As Mayor I will implement the law and see that LGBT homeless youth have the necessary resources to stay off the streets and become productive adults. Helping young people now helps them avoid mistakes that affect their futures. The Wanda Alston House is insufficient for the need we have in the District. However, it represents a good model for what housing for LGBT youth should be.

There is a similar need for seniors. As Mayor, I will continue the LGBT-inclusive Age-Friendly DC Initiative and create similar programs. The shortage of housing for our most vulnerable shows a need for more housing overall. I will fully fund the Housing Production Trust Fund, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Local Rent Supplement Program.

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?

This is a proposal that needs further study. It may not be appropriate to exclude residents from speaking before the ABC Board. Since the ABC Board has authority

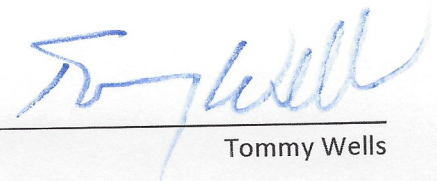

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to issue or deny liquor licenses, they may have a responsibility and obligation to hear from any stakeholders that wish to testify. Advisory Neighborhood Commissions are advisory. This proposal would alter the role and authority of ANCs. Before we do that, we must involve each of the 40 ANCs, discuss the change in role and authority, and likely wait until after the next election. The outcome also might be what is sought. While some ANCs and community groups welcome restaurants and clubs in their neighborhoods, others do not. This proposal may end applications before getting to the ABC Board.

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

Yes. It was inappropriate for the Mayor to privately promise the DC Center could stay at the Reeves Center while negotiating to trade the Reeves Center away. There are serious questions of whether the trade is a good deal for the District. This deal will have to be examined in detail. If the Reeves Center is traded or sold, I will assign a staff member to find the DC Center a new home in time to move the DC Center before they have to leave. The District has many properties and an appropriate site can be found. If the Reeves Center is redeveloped, it should include affordable housing. Whenever we use public assets, the number one priority should be that they're leveraged to create more affordable housing.



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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.

As the Chair of the Judiciary and Public Safety Committee, I have meet with Rick Rosendall and Bob Summersgill and moved important legislation including the JaParker Deoni Jones Birth Certificate Equality Amendment Act of 2013 and the Marriage Officiant Amendment Act of 2013.

I have held hearings on hate crimes in the District, and met several times with members of GLOV.

. I was a cosponsor, and I voted for the LGBTQ Homeless Youth Reform Amendment Act of 2013, Bill 20-51.

I introduced and held a hearing on the Bill 20-461, the Marriage License Issuance Amendment Act of 2013, to eliminate the 3-day waiting period.

I am working with advocates, including GLAA, to write the best surrogacy law in the country. This is a very technical bill and it is taking long that I would like to get right. I want to be sure that this is model legislation for the nation when we are done.

I have served as an active of the Committee on Health and supported the Council's work to implement many of reforms outlined in the DC Appleseed Center reports.

I have voted in favor of every LGBT rights legislation to come before the Council, and have worked with GLAA and other advocates to make our laws stronger.

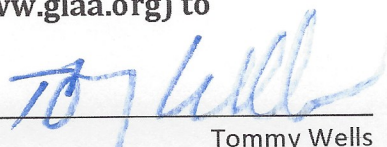
I have worked to end vouchers from our school system.

As a former member of the DC Board of Education, I have long advocated for substantial improvements in HIV/AIDS education and services within DC public schools. That work has continued through the anti-bullying legislation, which I supported.

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.

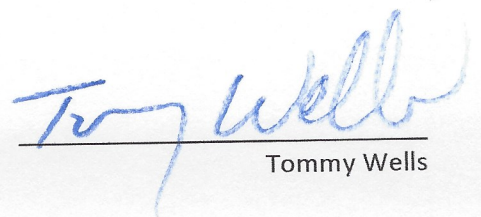
Please return your signed questionnaire responses by Thursday, February 6 to GLAA, P.O. Box 75265, Washington, D.C. 20013.

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


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equal@glaa.org. Thank you.


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