

**Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, DC
2015 Questionnaire for Ward 8 D.C. Council Candidates**

HOME RULE

1. ***If Congress acts to block recent bills enacted by the District to repeal the Armstrong Amendment and to prohibit conversion therapy for minors, will you speak out during your campaign in defense of these bills, and if elected will you stand with your colleagues against congressional meddling?***

Yes. It is imperative that the laws of the District of Columbia are respected by lawmakers on Capitol Hill, just as they would expect laws in their home states to be respected and not trampled on by the federal government in their local affairs. As a councilmember representing the great Ward 8, I will stand strong against any attempt by Congress to block any law enacted by the District, whether it's to prohibit the unnecessary, ineffective, and dangerous practice of conversion therapy for minors, or the legalization of marijuana through Initiative 71.

FAMILIES

2. ***Will you support Bill 21-16, the Collaborative Reproduction Amendment Act of 2015, to legalize and regulate surrogacy agreements?***

Yes. As our city and country evolve, so must our laws. Just as Councilmember Allen, I believe surrogacy should be an option for families wishing to have children. Whether it's traditional or gestational, families need protection through surrogacy agreements.

HEALTH

3. ***If you are assigned to the Committee on Health and Human Services, what will you do to improve performance at the HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD, and TB Administration (HAHSTA), including in HIV prevention, HIV/AIDS surveillance, and mental health services?***

While HAHSTA has made many improvements, there's still more work to be done. I would use the council's oversight role to address longstanding issues such as grant allocation, ensuring HAHSTA releases data more frequently, and pressuring HAHSTA and OSSE to move quickly in expanding HIV/AIDS education for DCPS students. I would also work with HAHSTA to increase their



outreach east of the Anacostia River on substance use treatment and HIV care.

The council must ensure that funding is reaching at-risk populations in all parts of the city, including Wards 7 & 8.

4. Will you support legislation establishing a regulatory framework to set LGBT cultural competency standards for healthcare providers?

Yes. One of my goals is to expand access to quality healthcare for all DC residents, including for many LGBTQ and SGL people. The lack of culturally competent providers is not only a huge barrier that we must work to tear down, but it shows the unfinished business of developing high quality healthcare for all DC families. Our healthcare system must be a leading example for the nation on how to provide quality healthcare services without any preconceived judgments about the individual based on who they are and how they were born.

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

Yes. LGBTQ and SGL individuals face health disparities that many would say are linked to societal stigma, discrimination, and denial of their human rights. Not to mention the high rates of psychiatric disorders, substance abuse, and suicide that can be attributed to discrimination against LGBTQ persons. Ironically, the same health disparities and bridging the gap of mental health and substance abuse treatment affect many African Americans, an outright majority of the population in Ward 8.

As a councilmember, I will ensure our annual budgets reflect the need for more funding so that we can continue on a path of reducing disease transmission and progression, increasing mental and physical well-being, reduce healthcare costs, and increase longevity of our residents.

JUDICIARY

6. If you are assigned to the Committee on the Judiciary, 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. I would press for increased oversight of MPD's gathering and analysis of crime statistics because this data is important to how resources are allocated and how we respond to areas of increasing tension. I would also put pressure on



MPD to ensure there's cultural and linguistic competency in the police force. I believe MPD must expand their Gay and Lesbian Liaison Unit to all eight wards. What I hear the most from LGBTQ and SGL residents east of the river, particularly in Ward 8, there is no support from MPD on issues related to hate crimes in our communities. Not all hate crimes occur in DuPont Circle and not all LGBTQ residents reside in that area. We must redouble our efforts to ensure our agencies are reaching across the entire city and making every effort to touch LGBTQ residents in DuPont Circle and Anacostia

7. Will you support Bill 21-38, the Death with Dignity Act of 2015?

Yes. I support laws that allow mentally competent and terminally ill adults the right to seek medical assistance in dying. I look forward to the hearings that will be held by the Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety and the Committee on Health and Human Services to address concerns about the mental health condition of a resident seeking this medical assistance and life insurance issues.

HUMAN RIGHTS

8. Will you push to establish a project to increase government hiring from under-represented populations, including transgender people?

Yes. I will push to establish a project that would parallel the successes of the Project Empowerment Program at the Department of Employment Services. The program would focus on breaking new ground in being a nationwide leader in employing our underserved populations, including many in our transgender community, returning citizens, and, as my father would say, "the last, the least, and the lost." The Transgender Economic Empowerment Initiative is a great example of what this program should emulate.

YOUTH AND SENIORS

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

Yes. I believe the Council can play a large role in expanding residents' access to affordable housing and the opportunity to train for and secure good paying jobs. When I become the councilmember representing the great Ward 8, I will work to ensure funding and organizational resources are directed to expanding services for our LGBTQ residents.

CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES



10. 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. We don't need a nanny state in the District telling adults how to live their lives and what they patronize for entertainment.

Your record is part of your rating. Please list any actions that you have taken that may help illustrate your record on behalf of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people.

It has been my mission in this campaign, and will be a high achievement for me on the Council of the District of Columbia, to learn from many communities, including our LGBTQ and SGL population, on being a better public servant on the causes that matter the most to everyday residents. As the owner of Efficiency Contractors, a small construction company named in honor of my late mother, Effi Barry, I have hire over 200 residents of many walks of life. A number of my employees have been returning citizens, first time workers, and SGL. I've created a workplace environment that focuses on getting the job done, not what you do or who you love when you leave work. That's how our society should be when employing potential candidates for positions they're qualified for based on experience, not based on who the love.

I'm proud to have Anthony Lorenzo Green, Chairman of ANC 8B and the only LGBTQ elected official in Ward 8, to serve as an Honorary Co-Chair of my campaign. I'm also proud to have the support of former Councilmember Jim Graham.

