

Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance of Washington, DC
2006 Questionnaire for D.C. Mayor Candidates
www.glaa.org/archive/2006/mayoralquestionnaire2006.shtml

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PUBLIC SAFETY

1. Will you support funding for mandatory gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender (GLBT) sensitivity and diversity training for all members of the Fire/EMS Department, starting with the first budget you submit to the Council ?

If this were deemed a serious problem, then yes I would support funding for sensitivity training. But first we must split the EMS out from under the Fire Department as the Fire Chief has too much on his shoulders that he can't even make sure we have EMS trained in CPR as demonstrated at recent City Council hearings.

2. Will you appoint a new Fire/EMS Department Chief who is committed to rooting out the Department's deeply entrenched homophobia and transphobia?

Yes, of course. No person should feel discriminated against by any government agency in the entire City.

3. Will you include representatives of the GLBT community in the search process when you appoint a new Police Chief and a new Fire/EMS Chief?

I think this is a very good idea.

4. Are you committed to continuing the Gay & Lesbian Liaison Unit within the Metropolitan Police Department?

Yes. They have been widely applauded by the GLBT community thus demonstrating the unit as an important public resource.

5. Will you submit a budget request for the Office of Police Complaints that will be large enough to continue to avoid developing a backlog of cases?

I am the only candidate taking a serious position on prison and police reform. One of these reforms includes making the Office of Police Complaints an independent entity made up of community leaders from all backgrounds. Right now, the police are policing themselves and we wonder why street harassment against all sorts of people happens on a regular basis without real consequences to police officers and their superiors. For more on my reform positions, feel free to check out >>
http://www.ceo4u.com/sites/mayorchris/publicity/Prison_Reform_Elect_Chris.pdf

6. Will you ensure that the Department of Corrections enforces the District's Human Rights Act against contractors who discriminate against transgender visitors to correctional facilities?

Absolutely. And while we are at it I'd like to see our correctional facilities properly maintained and cleaned and all prisoners treated fairly. This includes providing nutritional food programs and the opportunity to participate in job-training programs.

7. Will you oppose legislation creating so-called "prostitution-free zones," which would give the police, who routinely assume that every transgendered person is a prostitute until proven otherwise, virtually unlimited power to harass our transgendered residents?

Yes indeed. Jump-out zones, crime emergency bills, prostitution-free zones... these are all policies which can turn this City into a police-state. We must stand up against these injustices throughout the entire City.

AIDS AND PUBLIC HEALTH

8. Will you ensure that the drive to make HIV testing routine among District residents includes funding for counseling and referrals to treatment facilities for those who test positive?

Testing is pointless unless the City is prepared to help those who test positive, period. We need more counselors and treatment for our sick friends. If we have the money for a baseball stadium, we best have the money for our people who are dying. It's about respect and long-term goals. Most of the current City leadership apparently lacks both.

9. Are you committed to continuing and strengthening the District's condom distribution program?

Absolutely. This is a slam-dunk and can go a long way in preventing the spread of STD's. Condoms can be made available at all District agencies. Abstinence is not the answer.

10. The District is being forced by the federal government to switch from a unique identifier system to a names reporting system for people testing positive for HIV. Will you support legislation to strengthen our medical privacy laws, such as by creating a private right of action for those whose confidentiality is violated by District government employees or contractors?

We'll have to publicly vet out what consequences come from a private right of action if it is indeed legally founded, but I agree with the spirit of this notion. Unique identifiers, not names, must be used and the District can challenge this federal mandate as unconstitutional.

HUMAN RIGHTS

11. Will you submit a budget for the Office of Human Rights (OHR) large enough to allow it to reduce to 270 days the average gap between the time that a discrimination complaint is filed and the time OHR issues a finding of probable cause?

I believe this is very reasonable. As discrimination seems to be growing in this city where the gap between the rich and poor continues to widen, we must find more money and better-trained staff at OHR.

12. Will you refuse to issue proclamations and otherwise decline to honor individuals or organizations that promote any sort of bigotry?

Absolutely, bigotry has no place in the Nation's Capital. However, I can't help but to smirk when I think of the bigots who work on the Hill. These same people control our budget and how we spend our money. We need statehood now to cut the purse strings from Congress and to reclaim our ability to fund the programs that matter to District residents.

13. Will you refuse to appoint to your Interfaith Council ministers such as Bishop Owens and Rev. Willie Wilson who have publicly hurled vile language against members of the District's GLBT community?

Why do they do this? Why these attacks against the GLBT community? Does it do them and their congregations any good? So many questions, but very little answers from these so-called leaders. My question to them, would Jesus attack the GLBT community? ... of course not and neither should they.

14. Will you invite representatives of GLAA to participate in the search process when you appoint a new Director of the Office of Human Rights, as Mayor Williams did in 2003?

This seems to make very logical sense.

15. Are you committed to enforcing the provisions of the D.C. Human Rights Act forbidding discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression?

Absolutely. Standing against any form of discrimination is a tenant of the DC Statehood Green party. Take a look at our platform at >> <http://www.dcstatehoodgreen.org/platform>
You won't find the same strong stance in the DC Democratic party platform.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

16. Do you support legal recognition of marriages between partners of the same sex?

Yes. In fact, I can and will perform civil partnerships this summer, as I am an ordained minister. I plan to ordain other ministers with the same beliefs of tolerance, brotherhood, and love. We are all one.

17. Will your Administration publicize and enforce the recently enacted laws that have significantly expanded the rights and responsibilities of domestic partners?

Absolutely. We must take on directly in a very explicit way the right-wing campaign to tarnish same-sex partnerships. Literature about the rights of domestic partnerships will be made widely available throughout the City right alongside pamphlets demonstrating our constitutional rights and the right to be free from police harassment.

18. Will you support legislation in the District to continue expanding the existing domestic partnership program to include all relevant rights and responsibilities of marriage in D.C. law?

Absolutely. If elected, I personally will marry partners at the Wilson building as these actions shall uphold the strong spirit of Green party principles. A great example of this has already happened in New Paltz, NY, where Green Party Mayor, Jason West married partners upon his election to challenge NY marriage laws. It's about time Americans and the District grow up and grow beyond opposite-sex-only marriages so to include all of our same-sex friends in the opportunity to share the gifts of life with their partner in legal marriage. If it can happen in the District it can happen throughout the Nation.

19. Will you support the legislative and/or regulatory changes necessary to ensure that the District recognizes civil unions, domestic partnerships and similar legal relationships established in other jurisdictions?

As demonstrated above... my commitment to this cause is clear.

PUBLIC EDUCATION AND YOUTH

20. Do you oppose both federal and local voucher programs that fund students in religious schools that are beyond the protections of the D.C. Human Rights Act?

Keeping with the DC Statehood Green Party platform, I stand against school privatization schemes such as vouchers, period. I will fight to build a stronger public school system as you can read at >> <http://www.otten06.com/platform>

21. Do you oppose the use of either federal or District taxpayer funds to promote "abstinence-only-until-marriage" sex education that undermines safer-sex programs by discouraging the use of condoms and that effectively tells gay and lesbian students that they must remain celibate forever because they may not legally marry?

Yes. Abstinence-only programs are not realistic especially in today's society when children are exposed to sex at an earlier age. The key is to build educational programs that deal with sex in a frank and mature way with our young people whether gay or straight. Condom distribution programs and serious personal counseling shall occur at all DC High Schools if I am elected Mayor.

CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES

22. Do you support the relocation of the many gay bars and businesses that were displaced by the new ballpark, even if local NIMBYs and homophobes oppose them?

I'd like to relocate them right back to where these business once were. I will fight for these owners so that they are finally properly compensated for their duress and loss of income for the sake of rich baseball team owners. The baseball stadium scam is not over. They want more public dollars for this debacle and illegal use of eminent domain. I pledge to challenge all aspects of the baseball stadium construction if elected and this includes the improper destruction of legitimate businesses that were once thriving at this location.

23. Will you support legislation to curb the abuses of NIMBYs who are now allowed to file an endless series of baseless complaints to harass or extort bars and restaurants?

Harassment must end... whether its police harassment or illegal harassment of legitimate businesses.

24. Do you oppose the Youth Protection from Obscene Video Games Act (B16-0125), a clone of other laws that have consistently been struck down by the courts on constitutional grounds?

This question is tricky. Video games are getting more and more graphic as technology continues to improve and hence some oversight is necessary. I would pledge to take a closer look at such legislation to find a middle ground where both constitutional rights can be upheld while simultaneously empowering parents to help their kids make more informed decisions around the booming video-game industry and its products.

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 men, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgenders.

- I am a recently ordained minister committed to performing civil partnerships.
- I participate in regular street harassment workshops to learn how to diffuse oppression on women and the GLBT community.
- I participate in Cop Watch programs to keep a keen eye and open ear about how cops are working with our entire City including the GLBT community.

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