

1) Why are you running for mayor, and if (re)elected, what are the three most important things you intend to accomplish in the near term?

I am running for Mayor because I believe I can lead our city in a more responsible, collegial and constructive way.

1. Restore fiscal responsibility
2. Establish a birth – 24 vision for public education
3. Establish a collaborative working relationship with Councilmembers

2) What are the three most important issues facing the District of Columbia in the next decade?

1. Fiscal health
2. Statehood
3. Education reform

3) What are your qualifications to serve as mayor?

I have been a public servant in one form or fashion my entire life. I began my career at the DC Association for Retarded Citizens, where I advocated for and got city laws reformed that changed the way people with disabilities were treated.

After the DC Arc, I became the Director of the District's Department of Human Services (DHS) under Mayor Sharon Pratt. At the time, DHS was a 7,000 employee agency with responsibility for the administration of city services related to Health, Mental Health, Juvenile Justice, Child Welfare, Homeless Services, Income Maintenance and Health Care Finance.

I strengthened DHS's programs to result in a significant drop in infant mortality (from 20.1 per thousand in 1991 to 16.7 per thousand in 1993 and down to 12.5 per thousand by 1998), a 27 percent increase in immunization rates for children under 2 (from 43 percent in 1990 to 70 percent in 1994), and an increase in out-patient mental health treatment programs that led to the lowest average daily number of patients per day at St. Elizabeth's Hospital. I also championed the implementation of several initiatives and programs that addressed the developmental needs of children and their families such as *Turning Points*, a program involving wrap-around services aimed at reducing truancy and strengthening school performance for DC public school students, and *Families Together* which was successful in keeping more than 800 DC children out of foster care.

In January 1995, I was appointed as the first Executive Director of Covenant House Washington. From the beginning, I was committed to ensuring that the organization was not just in the community it serves, but also a part of the community. In a short

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period of time, Covenant House Washington became one of the most effective agencies of its kind in the metropolitan area. Targeting youth ages 16 to 21 years of age, Covenant House Washington offers an array of programs and services designed to help youth in crisis reclaim their lives. While the agency's primary service is emergency shelter, it also offers educational services, job training, life skills enhancement, a transitional living program, as well as a Peer Supported Pregnancy Prevention Program.

The organization was one of several participants in the city's Department of Employment Services innovative Youth Opportunity Initiative, a program that assists youth ages 14 –21 to develop necessary skills to gain meaningful employment. In response to an increased need for services, Covenant House Washington conducted a successful Capital Campaign to build a new Community Service Center in Southeast Washington to ensure that young people have a safe haven to meet their basic needs.

I assumed the role of Chairperson of the Ward 7 Democrats in May 2003, began serving on the District of Columbia Democratic State Committee.

In the September 2004 primary election, I defeated the incumbent Ward 7 member of the Council of the District of Columbia, and was sworn-in as a member of the Council on January 2, 2005.

In my 2 years as Ward 7 councilmember, I chaired a Special Committee on the Prevention of Youth Violence, and was able to advocate for funding for myriad Ward 7 projects like the Effi Barry HIV/AIDS initiative, new Benning Road, Anacostia, Francis Gregory libraries, Kennilworth-Parkside and Ridge Road Recreation Centers, Deanwood Center and HD Woodson High School. I co-introduced the School Modernization Financing legislation that led to the unprecedented investment in fixing and rebuilding our public schools.

I became the Chairman of the Council on January 2, 2007. One of my first actions as Chairman was to put education under the responsibility of the Committee of the Whole so that all members of the Council could have a say in education matters. I presided over the Council's deliberations on Mayoral control of the public schools and conducted an unprecedented 9 hearings on the subject.

I also spearheaded the Pre-K Expansion and Enhancement Act, which establishes a voluntary, high-quality pre-school program that will provide 2,000 new classroom slots for 3 & 4 year olds by 2014.

I have led efforts to improve the Council's operations and transparency, and have presided over the Council's deliberations on 4 fiscal years' balanced budgets.

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4) In the context of the projected budget shortfall, do you believe the current budget discussions fairly balance increases in revenue against spending reductions and fairly allocate the burden of revenue increases? If not, what would you propose?

Yes

5) The District is suffering significantly higher unemployment than Maryland and Virginia in this recession. Describe your plan for broad-based job recovery.

The District is in a unique position of having an increase in jobs and an increase in unemployment. Clearly that shows our residents are not prepared for the jobs being created.

I believe that all education is vocational education, and the best "jobs" program is an education. We need to continue on the path of education reform so that our graduates are prepared for college or the workplace.

I have wholeheartedly supported UDC's creation of a Community College where residents receive a range of continuing education opportunities.

The Council put \$8.3M into the FY10 budget workforce investment initiatives. We have also provided funding for adult literacy programs to address the District's 37% functional illiteracy rate.

6) If (re)elected, what will you do to create and protect affordable housing options for both home-buyers and tenants and alleviate homelessness?

I have been a long-time supporter of the following initiatives and will continue to be supportive:

- NEW COMMUNITIES
- HOPE VI
- HOUSING PRODUCTION TRUST FUND
- INCLUSIONARY ZONING
- RENT SUPPLEMENT PROGRAM
- HOUSING FIRST
- HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

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7) Do you think reform in the D.C. Public Schools is headed in the right direction? Explain your answer.

Yes. I voted for Mayoral control of the schools and agree with many of the Chancellor's decisions to reform DCPS.

8) What policies do you recommend for reducing crime and increasing public safety in the District of Columbia?

Just as a good education system is the foundation for a jobs program, the best crime reduction strategy is a jobs program.

9) What are the three most important steps that need to be taken to revitalize the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority?

1. The three jurisdictions need to fill the leadership void and work together at the highest level to find a regional source of funding for any new money required for METRO. Even with big fare hikes, the Council had to find an extra \$13 million to cover the increased operating subsidy, or face significant service cuts this year. The \$13 million is one-time money and my staff is working on analysis of possible revenue sources to discuss with the other jurisdictions.
2. Address the imbalance between Maryland, Virginia, and the District on funding WMATA. Having the smallest jurisdiction pay 38% of the cost is not sustainable. The regional sources being examined would help address this issue.
3. Reconsider the governance model in use since the 1970's. Are all the Board members in a sufficient position to be able to commit their jurisdictions and to hold WMATA accountable for management decisions?

10) If (re)elected, what steps will you take to invigorate the D.C. statehood movement?

Below is a list of things I have accomplished and/or will continue to pursue in order to achieve statehood for DC.

- THE COUNCIL PASSED LEGISLATION CREATING THE 51ST STATE COMMISSION ESTABLISHMENT TO STUDY, RESEARCH, AND PROMOTE STATEHOOD FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.
- IN MARCH 2009, THE COUNCIL ESTABLISHED THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON STATEHOOD AND SELF-DETERMINATION TO DEVELOP AN EFFECTIVE, COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY TO

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ACHIEVE THE GOAL OF STATEHOOD FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA.

- CHAIRED BY COUNCILMEMBER MICHAEL BROWN
- DUTIES NOW UNDER CM ALEXANDER'S COMMITTEE
- REACH OUT TO OUR COUNTERPARTS IN STATE GOVERNMENTS TO EDUCATE THEM AND ASK FOR THEIR SUPPORT OF OUR EFFORTS THROUGH THE PASSAGE OF RESOLUTIONS IN THEIR STATE LEGISLATURES.
- IN JANUARY 2008, 7 COUNCILMEMBERS AND I TRAVELED TO CONCORD NEW HAMPSHIRE TO TESTIFY BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON STATE-FEDERAL RELATIONS AND VETERANS' AFFAIRS IN SUPPORT OF HR 26 – "A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING REGRET THAT NEW HAMPSHIRE'S UNITED STATES SENATORS VOTED TO DENY THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA THE RIGHT TO BE REPRESENTED IN THE CONGRESS."
- ATTENDED THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATORS ANNUAL LEGISLATIVE SUMMIT IN NEW ORLEANS IN 2008 & PHILADELPHIA IN JULY 2009 TO RAISE AWARENESS OF DC'S STATUS.
- HOSTED CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS RECEPTIONS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA IN SEPTEMBER 2008 & 2009 TO RAISE AWARENESS OF DC'S STATUS. .
- ATTENDED THE DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL CONVENTION IN DENVER IN AUGUST 2008 - RALLY FOR DC VOTING RIGHTS AT THE DENVER MINT

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- U.S. MINT DENIED DC'S REQUEST TO PRINT "TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION" ON THE DC QUARTER.

ADDITIONALLY, SEVERAL ROUNDTABLES AND PUBLIC HEARINGS WERE HELD TO BRING ATTENTION TO THE ISSUE, WHICH INCLUDED SUCH TOPICS AS:

- THE DC VOTING RIGHTS ACT AND THE GUN AMENDMENT
- THE HISTORY OF DC AND HOW THAT HISTORY IMPACTS OUR CURRENT STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY
- THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF THE DC VOTING RIGHTS ACT AND LEGAL PATHWAYS TO STATEHOOD
- THE FISCAL AND BUDGETARY IMPACTS OF STATEHOOD
 1. IN ORDER TO BECOME A STATE, DC MUST CONTROL ALL THREE BRANCHES OF GOVERNMENT – EXECUTIVE, LEGISLATIVE, AND JUDICIAL. OUR JUDICIAL BRANCH IS CURRENTLY UNDER FEDERAL CONTROL. OUR JUDGES ARE APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND OUR COURT SYSTEM IS PAID FOR BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. PRIOR TO 1996, DC PAID FOR THE COURTS BUT IT WAS TAKEN OVER BY THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OVER OUR OBJECTIONS IN THE REVITALIZATION ACT.
 2. ON FEBRUARY 2ND CMs EVANS AND MENDELSON INTRODUCED A BILL, WHICH WAS FIRST PROPOSED DURING THE HOME RULE NEGOTIATIONS IN 1974, AND WAS INTRODUCED BY THE ENTIRE COUNCIL IN 2001. IT WOULD SET UP THE STRUCTURE OF LOCAL CONTROL OVER OUR COURT SYSTEM, A NECESSARY STEP BEFORE STATEHOOD.

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3. IF THE BILL IS ADOPTED, CONGRESS WOULD HAVE TO PASS THE BILL AS WELL AND CHANGE THE HOME RULE CHARTER.
4. THE COST OF RUNNING JUST OUR COURT SYSTEM WOULD BE AT LEAST \$660 MILLION FOR FY10 THROUGH FY13. WE MUST IDENTIFY THIS AMOUNT IN THE FY11 BUDGET AND EVERY YEAR THEREAFTER IN ORDER TO SHOW WE ARE SERIOUS ABOUT STATEHOOD.

- THE PERSPECTIVE OF LOCAL LAW STUDENTS ON DC STATEHOOD AND SELF-DETERMINATION
- INSTALLED A “TAX TICKER” SIGN OUTSIDE THE JOHN A. WILSON BUILDING SO THE THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE WHO PASS BY CAN LEARN ABOUT OUR “TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION” STATUS.
- CEREMONIAL RENAMING OF SOUTH CAPITOL STREET AS “TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION” STREET
- PASSED LAW TO REQUIRE “TAXATION WITHOUT REPRESENTATION” SIGNAGE AT NATIONALS PARK
- HUNG BANNER FROM REVIEWING STAND FOR PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURAL PARADE
- UTILIZING ALL FEDERAL CONNECTIONS AND LOBBYING CONGRESS AND THE PRESIDENT TO PASS LEGISLATION GRANTING VOTING REPRESENTATION, AUTONOMY, AND POTENTIALLY FULL STATEHOOD.
 - IN AN EFFORT TO SECURE GREATER AUTONOMY FOR DC, DELEGATE ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON INTRODUCED TWO BILLS IN THE 111TH CONGRESS TO ELIMINATE CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW OF THE DISTRICT'S BUDGET AND LEGISLATION.

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- ON NOVEMBER 18, 2009 DR. GANDHI, THE MAYOR AND I TESTIFIED AT HOUSE SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING IN SUPPORT OF THE BILLS
- DC VOTE HOSTING LUNCHEON BRIEFING ON BUDGET AND LEGISLATIVE AUTONOMY NEXT WEDNESDAY, MARCH 31 AT NOON.
- LOBBYING EFFORTS TO GET PRESIDENT OBAMA TO MENTION STATEHOOD OR FULL DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS FOR DC IN HIS STATE OF THE UNION SPEECH.
- THE COUNCIL HAS SUPPORTED THE EFFORTS OF DC VOTE, STAND UP FOR DEMOCRACY DC AND OTHER NON-PROFITS WORKING ON LOBBYING, PR AND EDUCATION CAMPAIGNS, ESPECIALLY IN OTHER STATES.
- ONGOING STATEHOOD STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS WITH INDIVIDUALS AND LOCAL ADVOCACY GROUPS THAT SUPPORT SELF-DETERMINATION. MEETINGS, WHICH ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC, ARE HELD ON A REGULAR BASIS (COUNCILMEMBER MICHAEL BROWN HAS HOSTED APPROXIMATELY SIX STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS)
- ALSO FORMED THREE “STAKEHOLDER SUBCOMMITTEES” TO SEEK PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN THE FORMATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF SEVERAL OUTSIDE EVENTS TO BRING ATTENTION TO THE ISSUE OF STATEHOOD AND SELF-DETERMINATION.
- WE HAVE DEVELOPED PARTNERSHIPS WITH LOCAL COLLEGES TO EDUCATE AND MOBILIZE ALL OF THEIR STUDENTS AND OTHER

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ACADEMIC INSTITUTIONS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY
REGARDING DC'S SITUATION.

- WE HAVE WORKED DIRECTLY WITH STUDENT AND FACULTY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, UDC DAVID A. CLARKE SCHOOL OF LAW, AND AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WASHINGTON COLLEGE OF LAW TO INCORPORATE STUDENTS INTO OUR STATEHOOD EFFORTS.
- PLANNING A STATE HALL MEETING (OR RALLY, OR SIMILAR EVENT) AND RECOGNITION OF NATIONAL DC STATEHOOD DAY
- PLANNING AND IMPLEMENT A MEDIA OUTREACH STRATEGY AND STATEHOOD WEBSITE.
- DEVELOPED A BROCHURE WHICH WE HAVE DISSEMINATED WIDELY NATIONWIDE AND LOCALLY.

11) Cite an instance in your public career where you have compromised with those with whom you have disagreed in order to achieve a larger goal.

When I was the Executive Director of The DC Association for Retarded Citizens, I helped organize a coalition of anti-group home advocates so that we could work together to change the zoning regulations—the larger goal. They wanted more spacing and the ARC wanted more integration.

12) The District's election laws do not allow the rights of minorities to be subject to popular vote. Do you nevertheless think the District's new Religious Freedom and Civil Marriage Equality Law should be put up for popular vote? Why or why not?

No. I believe in our democratic system, members of the Council and the Mayor are elected by residents to represent their views and do what is best for the District of Columbia, and that is what occurred with passage of the Religious Freedom & Civil Marriage Equality Law.

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