

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire**  
**April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary**  
**Ward 4 Council - Calvin Gurley**

**1. Why are you running for City Council, and if (re)elected, what are the priority areas you intend to concentrate on in the near term?**

**Ward 4 residents are tired and frustrated from losing.** Our children are losing in school.

Ward 4 residents are losing to the high rates burglaries, armed robberies and muggings.

Ward 4 is losing small businesses and jobs.

Ward 4 Seniors and Retirees are losing to utility rate increases as well as increases in property taxes, sales taxes, D.C. surcharges.

Ward 4 lost firefighters jobs that were given to residents living in New Jersey, Delaware and as far as New York.

Ward 4 has lost its prestige and respect as a powerful and dominant Ward in the District of Columbia.

Gurley's first priority as the next Ward 4 Council member is-

**Crime.**

1) Ward 4 - Fourth District Metropolitan Police will be the best in the city. Councilmember Gurley will seek full funding to increase the ranks of police officers to be on the streets; and we must have the necessary resources for our police force to perform successfully in keeping the street and community safe. A win for our police department.

2. Councilmember Gurley will provide stability on the job for all police officers by pushing for the Government and Mayor to finally approve a negotiated agreement. Our officers have been without a renewed contract for seven or more years.

3) All residents will receive full service and equal *treatment* with professional behavior and service from the 4<sup>th</sup> District. All police officers and management will receive training and will enforce a no tolerance policy in handling bullying, sexual harassment and hate crimes attempts and altercations and family abuse.

Safe streets to walk without fear and seeing children play again will come about by enforcing loitering and youth curfew laws. We will win against crime in our Ward.

**Children and Youth Avoiding Crime – Keeping youth busy and entertained A Win-Win!**

Our recreations centers will employ area college and university students majoring in Physical Education to create and implement fun activities and inviting programs of learning and play. This can bring great work experience to those college students as well as entertain our children off the streets. Councilmember Gurley as a former recipient - will seek much of the funding from the U.S. Department of Justice Youth & Gang Intervention Programs.

There will tutorial programs to assist our children with the help they need to win in their classrooms. Those children who participate in the tutorial programs on a weekly basis will WIN special treats/

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire**  
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encouragements of food coupons from local food retailers [Dominos, Ledo's, McDonalds, Wendy's and Safeway] and purchase cards from local retailers Barber Shops, Nail Salons, and CVS's.

**Youth Citizenship Program A win for a win.**

There will be a Citizenship Program that will be sponsored and implemented at all recreational centers. Students and youth will be given three one-hour classes on 1) community and family values, 2) anger management and 3) discipline, style & appearance. Completion of each one-hour class will win the child or youth a gift cash card or movie pass [with one drink and popcorn]. Upon completion of the entire course participants will receive a Citizenship Certificate with a birthstone ring/signet ring.

**Schools** must provide more than just standardized test learning. Our children will win in being involved with music and arts, after school activities in producing music, chorus groups, chess teams, table top tennis tournaments, military drill teams, marching band,

Schools are our children's' second parents and with that responsibility "social and family values" must also be taught in the classrooms. Tradition never failed the schools until we abandon home economics, government/civic classes and stop instilling into our children our values for living together in a community. Calvin Coolidge and Roosevelt High Schools must be renovated immediately; our children will no longer attend schools with leaky roofs, peeling paint and with dilapidated walls and structures. When Ward 4 wins Councilmember Gurley will put pride in our children and in the schools again.

Our rich community of Ward 4 has expectations for our children and those expectations will be firmly expressed in our schools and at the recreation centers. Community family values and our expectation [as a Ward] will be expressed for youth to achieve high school and college diplomas, complete job and vocational training and enter the workforce or join the armed service. No slackers are being accepted in our schools or at the recreation centers.

**Our Dear Seniors and Retirees**

Seniors and Retirees [which Ward 4 has a large share of] will be protected from attacks on their monthly Social Security payments and retirement programs and will be able to save money. Our seniors and retirees are losing their homes due to our elected officials not protecting them from rising property taxes and rising utility rate increases. Our Ward 4 Seniors will keep their homes without threat or fear financially or by way of tax assessments.

Gurley is not waiting to open his council office but he is fighting PEPCO and the D.C. Water and Sewer Authority at many past public hearings to stop the unfair increase in our residents' utility bills.

1) Pepco must underwrite all Smart Meters for any future unforeseeable health risk to D.C. residents and their families.

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire  
April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary  
Ward 4 Council - Calvin Gurley**

2) Smart Meters must not be used to increase electricity rates...due to the meter ability to report “ peak use” on an individual by individual reading. A limitation of the current, old meter that reports on a collective group population monthly reading.

**2. With unemployment, homelessness, and general economic distress at historically high levels, do you favor increasing safety net spending in future budgets? If yes, which programs should be given highest priority?**

Tenant Advocacy Office  
Education Reform  
Additional hiring of Police officers  
Vocational training facilities in area high schools  
Early Childhood Education Programs – Head Start Program

**3. Do you consider the District’s total current budget to be too large, too small, or about right? Please explain.**

The current budget is not comparable with like jurisdiction whose school system is a national leader and whose economy is surviving. Montgomery County [under County Executive Isaac Leggett] compared to the District:

	<u>Population</u>	<u>Annual Budget</u>
District of Columbia	550,000	\$ 11 Billion
Montgomery County	839,000	\$ 4- 5 Billion

The size of the budget is too expensive for D.C. residents who live in this Federal Government Salary City. This is not the New York City with the Financial Districts of multi-billion dollar companies are headquartered. Most of the residents of the District are paid by the Federal Government General Schedule Salary Scale [GS]. A GS-13 federal manager cannot afford the new \$1,700.00 per one bedroom a month at the newly built apartment at Georgia and New Hampshire Avenues...based upon the 33% rule of take-home income going to rental cost.

Please be conscious of the forced increase of property tax rates for several years to take D.C. out of bankruptcy during Ms. Alice Rivlin’s Control Board occupancy. For several years, property tax rates increased as much as 45 to 50% in various neighborhoods. And, once the bills were paid those inflated rates brought in floods of new money – Mayor Williams left a \$1.5 billion dollar surplus at the end of his term. There has not been a moratorium for residents to have a rest period after those years of forced tax increases for their earnings to catch up to today’s subsequent and continual increases of property rates.

Likewise, the more the Council collects the more they spend. Not, curtailing there spending to 2008

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire**  
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budget cost has caused the average homeowner to get further behind from the savings if normal rate increases were assessed during those Financial Control Board years.

**Criminal**

The question is not if it is too large; but I proven in my comparison Montgomery County does well with services and it wonderful school system with less money but with a higher number of residents; but the D.C. budget is not well managed. The council has no accountability; it furloughs D.C. workers to balance its budget shortfalls by overspending. This practice should be prohibited because it is criminal; to irresponsibly spend money you don't have then force D.C. workers and their families to suffer and sacrifice by imposed furlough days – to pay for the deficit they [Council] created.

Have you forgotten: the average annual D.C. budget was 8 billion in 2008, 9 billion 2009, and now 10 to 11 billion. However, that was not enough. The council and the mayor spent outside the approved budgets with the following funds:

1) Tobacco Law Suit .....\$750 million dollars and 2) Williams' \$1.5 billion dollar surplus. Council spending is out of control. And as **an accountant**, I will bring financially responsibility to the Council.

The annual budget is not well managed.

**3. Part II**

**Levity with History**

Calvin GURLEY

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire  
April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary  
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Do you remember...these nifty ideas to create new taxes?

- 1) Harry Thomas...pushed legislation to TAX YOU for having snow on top of your car.
- 2) Jim Graham...pushing legislation to Tax YOU by increasing parking meter rates. *Well, Councilmember Jack Evans did follow the demands of his Ward 2 constituents to reduce parking rates...and Evans got it done. One good point for Jack Evans.*
- 3) Tommy Wells...pushed legislation to TAX YOU for requesting grocery bags. A simple solution to stop plastic bags from polluting the Potomac River would be to outlaw plastic bags in the District...period.
- 4) D.C. Parking Enforcement –ticket writers are working overtime in the wee-hours of the morning in your back yard placing pink color tickets on your vehicles.
- 5) More speed cameras have been installed on major road ways this year alone.

This Council has created a Machiavellian Society in the District of Columbia. The more stress and pain and hardship that is forced upon citizens the less resistance/energy we have 'available' to fight back even against the simplest attack on our hard-earned salaries or freedoms. Why, because citizens are working longer hours in attempt to catch up to tax increases and they have no energy left to fight city hall.

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire  
April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary  
Ward 4 Council - Calvin Gurley**

**4. Last year, income taxes for those earning above \$350,000 were increased from 8.5% to 8.95%, subject to a “sunset” provision after 4 years. With this temporary increase, all taxpayers earning between \$40,000 and \$350,000 remain subject to the 8.5% rate. Do you believe this is fair? If not, what would you propose?**

The Home Rule Charter allows the Council to pass emergency legislation that would increase taxes to remedy any financial crisis the city may have. In this 8.5% to 8.95 increase there is a sunset provision. But, there were no sunset or “roll-back” provision of several years of raised property taxes during the Financial Control Board’s control of the D.C. Government financial crisis.

I believe that given the District history of discrimination in assessing higher property tax rates on homeowners of lower income balances things out for those richer wage earners.

**The Richer Wards have been given a lower property tax assessment during the years.**

1. Mr. Pete Craig's lawsuit against city government for unfair assessment. Mr. Craig came out of retirement and paid to practice law in the District to sue Mayor Williams from unfairly assessing his northwest home. The Superior Court judge ruled in favor of Mr. Craig and mandated the District.
2. Washington Post, Wed. Sept. 28, 2005, METRO...front page "Judge Voids Some 2002 D.C. Assessments". States; a D.C. Superior Court judge has invalidated a third (33%) of the District's 2002 residential property tax assessment, RULING THAT **"WIDESPREAD DISCRIMINATION"** forced owners of **less-expensive HOUSES** TO SMOLDER AN EXCESSIVE TAX BURDEN.

SEE the last page of this questionnaire- Wash. Post article

**5. What recently revitalized DC neighborhood would you suggest as the best model for the city as a whole, and why?**

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

To create affordable housing; the same bricks and cement that it takes to build \$1,700. one bedroom apartments can also be used to build \$800.00 one bedroom and \$950.00 two bedroom apartments.

D.C. has to open up these boarded-up houses and apartment buildings and make them available to residents of the city.

I would like to keep all the college graduates [from our area colleges and universities] in District low cost, affordable apartments with working salary citizens. Our college graduates are heavy in student loans and their entry level job [25k to \$30k] is not enough to afford the current apartment rates. Our

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire**  
**April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary**  
**Ward 4 Council - Calvin Gurley**

college graduates can be an example to our young ones who live around their affordable apartments in showing them what a good college education can bring to one's life.

Homelessness has to be met with affordable housing, social counseling and social services.

**7. Do you think reform in the DC public schools is headed in the right direction? Explain your answer.**

Currently, the State Education Board is requesting a Waiver to No Child Left Behind. The reform is not visible or accountable due to the lack of written short-term and long term goals that commits the Board.

First, to have an improvement in this dynamic school system; the administration, the council and the mayor must, must treat our teachers with respect and dignity and give the very much needed resources to make them [teachers] become effective and efficient.

Most importantly, the principle must provide a safe and workable environment and classroom for all teachers to be productive.

The right direction will never be achieved until the Chancellor creates and implements short term and long term goals that are written and are to be evaluated by parents, the council and the mayor.

If the City Council wants to show a true commitment to D.C. education they should re-establish an Education Committee. The former chairman Vincent Gray established an Education Committee during his term, which involved all Council members

Secondly, the Chairman and the Council will have to show their sincere compassion for our children's education by allowing a percentage of D.C. Lottery sales revenue to be allotted to the DCPS. D.C. is the only jurisdiction that does not give state lottery sales revenue to their public school system, as do Maryland and Virginia. This Council has to let go of those lottery revenue funds. I as the next Ward 4 Councilmember will have this done for our children.

Thirdly, I was informed years ago from D.C. Superintendent, Dr. Clifford Janey that he had not created a "Recovery Program" for our children who have dropped out of the public school system. A drop-out "Recovery Program" is needed very much in the Nation's Capitol. The plan and program that I am familiar with will require legislation, enforcement upon parents, social counseling and a motivational learning program for a Recovery Program to be successful. This will require an never attempted project of recruiting young college graduates to not only teach but to create a school culture in which these returning students will be encourage to participate and become an improvement based upon an intended purpose. Getting too detailed...now.

Most importantly, every child is not college material or does not desire to attend college. The DCPS must inundate the schools with vocational trades and training "immediately"! Why the Williams'

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire**  
**April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary**  
**Ward 4 Council - Calvin Gurley**

administration was allowed to close down the several vocational training schools in the District is now taking its toll upon the District's unemployment numbers. Perhaps, it was the fear of Unions [increasing their membership with trained H.S. graduates] or the local construction industry wanted to keep labor costs low- D.C. cannot cater to either side

**8. How do you suggest that we repurpose the large number of school properties that have been closed over the past few years? Cite specific schools/communities as examples, if possible.**

The large number of school properties that have been closed need to be occupied by consolidation of several Charter School administrations, staff and teachers- and school counselors. Schools should be required to have the common school facilities; cafeteria, auditorium, play grounds etc. There is a fundamental structure that needs to state that this is a school. Office buildings are not schools. Give the children the sense of what a school is... not only in learning but in true form.

A Recovery Program must be implemented to have D.C. students who have dropped-out of school return for their high school degree. Schools will be needed here.

Secondly, every D.C. child is not college material and some desire not to attend college – but to seek a vocation. Schools will be needed to re-open vocational trades and training for auto mechanics, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, the culinary arts and masonry.

But, you forget. School properties especially in Ward 4 [Coolidge and Roosevelt HS.] have been pushed back from their promised renovation scheduled dates. Therefore, students in those school locations are attending schools that are not as run-down as Coolidge and Roosevelt – thus that school's population declines. What child wants to attend a worn-down school building with newly built McKinley H.S., H.D. Woodson H.S, Takoma EMS and others open to free admission?

**9. What are the most important steps that need to be taken to reform the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority?**

Reform is not the issue. Affordability is the issue. Transit costs for public ridership is too high for D.C. residents' scarce income. In addition, housing costs are high. D.C. must be the most affordable public transit city in the U.S. due to the fact that the Nation's Capitol should be affordable to all U.S. citizens to visit at a very minimal cost.

The Nations Capitol should lead Disney World and Disney Land in the number of visitors and tourists attendance per annum. That means, WMATA must be affordable not only to local residents but also to our fellow Americans [especially young high school students on their first visit to their Nations Capitol

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire**  
**April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary**  
**Ward 4 Council - Calvin Gurley**

– the seat of their U.S. Government.] An audit must be performed to review the apportionment of Federal and local Government funds to the rail system, bus system and the Metro Access system.

A next door neighbor just wrote the Ward 4 Councilmember that Metro Access fees have increased from \$1.70 per ride to \$7.20 within two years. The Council wrong and unforgiving answer was; Metro revenue of \$5 million dollars was not enough to pay for the \$90 million in cost to run Metro Access.

Well, this kind of revelation deserves some review; because within the first quarter of the \$90 million deficit Metro should have been alerted and appropriate financial action taken.

**10. Do you support funding the DC statehood campaign in the 2013 budget? If so, what amount would you support and for what purposes?**

Yes, I support funding of the D.C. Statehood Campaign for 2013.

However, the strategy must change. The Council nation-wide Statehood campaign from state to state is wasteful and a visit to the U.S. House and Senate buildings to talk to state representatives is more effective. It is better to convince the state representatives [since they are the ones that will vote on the Hill] than an attempt to convince the whole population of a state to support Statehood.

Conversely, the campaign trip around the nation will be wasteful in those Republican states because Statehood would put two Democratic Congressmen and one Democratic Senator on Capitol Hill.

The 2013 Budget Funds for Statehood must be set-aside for the only action that has yet to be taken. To borrow a former Black Civil Rights Leader's remedy; D.C. must take its case for Statehood to the United Nations – International Court.

**11. Do you believe that the current DC Council represents the interests of the broad public? If not, what segments of the public are underrepresented?**

1) Our children are not priority of the Council. D.C. D.C. is the only jurisdiction that does not apportion a percentage of Lottery revenue to financially assist their school system. Neighboring Virginia and Maryland gives a portion of their lottery revenues to their school systems.

2) Children and young adults. There are only two vocational schools offering trade and training to our children. Every child will not attend college. However, a child can find their mark and vocation in trades of auto mechanic, plumbing, electrician, masonry, carpentry, culinary arts and etc.

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire**  
**April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary**  
**Ward 4 Council - Calvin Gurley**

3) Safety. Our Council has not signed a contract/negotiated agreement with the Police Union in several years. The Council is negligent in not keeping the necessary level of Police personnel in the Department. The police staff has decrease below the 4,200 staff level for this increasing population.

3a) Crime in Ward 4.

Ward 4 has given Chief Charles Ramsey, Chief Lanier and the 4<sup>th</sup> District problem to service, no large amount of draw on its resources, and a relatively easy community to serve aside from the petty street crimes and domestic family calls. Why has not Ward 4 deserve a surge of police presence since the increase of and unsuspecting armed robberies, car-jacking with guns, street hold-ups and muggings throughout the neighborhood? Just 30 days of police presence will the counter punch to the criminal's jab [of sudden and numerous crimes] will make them think twice about returning to Ward 4.

4) The Council refused to hold the EPA accountable for the falsifying of lead levels in D.C. drinking water. Once the Washington Post reported on this error the Council should required that EPA:

- a. to pay for the testing of all children for the amount of lead contamination in their blood.
- b. to pay for the cost treatment of any child whose blood level of lead exceeds the approve amount.

**12. Do you support the creation of an independent ethics commission with members nominated by the Mayor and confirmed by the Council, as provided for in the newly enacted ethics reform legislation? Please explain your position.**

A new Ethics Office is not a true solution but a deficient answer. The true issue that this city refuses to face is employing officials with a Back-Bone to enforce rules and policy on the Mayor and those Holy-sanctified City Council members. \*(a)

From an audit viewpoint there should be no duplication of powers and authority to create a new office. The Board of Election and Ethic needs to be held accountable and adjustments in personnel must be the first line of corrective action. Bowser and the Council will waste more money to fund "duplications" of jobs and fund another partial functioning D.C. office. Those current laws that are in place need to be "fully" implemented -while the authorized officials need to carry-out their job or be fired.

Muriel Bowser and Council members have failed to realize that BOEE is dysfunctional and refuse to correct it- by side tracking this messy problem and throwing it under the rug just to place a new Ethics Office on top of it. Bowser and this council allowed BOEE laziness and buffoonery off the hook but fully support firing under-performing D.C.P.S. Teachers. In

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire**  
**April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary**  
**Ward 4 Council - Calvin Gurley**

evaluating all D.C. offices, agencies and departments - this is unfair and discriminatory to our teachers.

Mr. Togo West gave everyone the answer months ago...more auditors.

This new legislation lacks;

1. open and full disclosure of councilmember's' filling of information to the public. Yes, council

people fillings will be closed to the public – since there have been no mention of it.

2. Should a Council member do a “ U.S. House Rep. Charles Rangel” [not reporting to Congress his condominium rental revenue in the Caribbean]...

a. What are the penalties or fines for not filling, or wrongly filling or deceitfully filling?

b. Who will enforce any penalties related to the council reporting no or wrong information?

But first and foremost; who will be this courageous and bold person - to enforce their authority against Council members knowing that the same Councilmember created their [courageous person's] job and had confirmed this official [into their office] in the first place?

**13. Unlike most states, the District allows entities under contract with or soliciting contracts from the city to contribute to political campaigns. Is this a problem which future legislation should address, and, if so, how? Should DC ban all corporate contributions?**

I will give signature to the upcoming Initiative [author by Bryan Weaver and Ms. Brown] to stop corporate contributions – bundling.

**14. Do you support the use of Constituent Service Funds (CSFs)? If so, why? If not, would you be willing to work for their elimination?**

I am an auditor and an accountant with the Federal Government. This type of fund should follow the same internal controls that were used during the Federal Government operation of Petty Cash Funds.

Constituent Service Funds are very important to Ward Council members in order to service and financially assist the residents of their ward. Strong internal controls [if they were in placed] will have the effect of oversight and will reduce the amount of loss should theft or illegal actions occur. One important part of such internal controls is quarterly reporting of expenditures followed by an audit

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire**  
**April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary**  
**Ward 4 Council - Calvin Gurley**

[statistical sampling].

The importance of the service fund is to financially assist D.C. residents during time of emergencies, utility cut-off threats, funeral arrangements and other issues. Why punish the residents for what some Council members are wrongly doing?

**15. What should DC do to improve its job-training programs?**

Bring back and open several vocational high schools with up-to-date equipment and machinery to train and satisfy apprenticeship for our young students and our student drop-out population.

D.C. Democracy thank you for the opportunity to participate in this questionnaire. I hoped that I answered your questions and offer some of my history of the city with you.

Suggestion; since this is a Ward race – more questions should be relevant to the issues of that Ward. Perhaps, members on your board or staff can use their experiences and problems as questions - as it pertains to the particular Ward where they live. Calvin GURLEY – WARD 4 COUNCIL 2012

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire  
April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary  
Ward 4 Council - Calvin Gurley**

The Washington Post

# MIETRO

**B**  
DISTRICT  
EDITION

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2005

K DC 5

## Judge Voids Some 2002 D.C. Assessments

*Tax Burden Called Unfair; Possible Remedies to Be Offered in November*

By **LORI MONTGOMERY**  
and **ERIC M. WEISS**  
*Washington Post Staff Writers*

A D.C. Superior Court judge has invalidated a third of the District's 2002 residential property tax assessments, ruling that "widespread discrimination" forced owners of less-expensive houses to shoulder an excessive tax burden.

Judge Eugene N. Hamilton of the Superior Court's Tax Division said the city's 2002 assessments of 35,000 properties — many of them in rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods east of the Anacostia River, along 16th Street NW and just west of Rock Creek Park — were "arbitrary" and "capricious." He ordered District officials and disgruntled taxpayers who brought suit to present him with proposed remedies at a hearing in November.

The impact of the case is unclear, and it could be years before taxpayers feel its effect, if any, attorneys said. But Peter S. Craig, the Cleveland Park homeowner and retired federal lawyer who first challenged the assessments, said he will seek to have them rolled back to 2001 levels, a move that could force the city to refund as much as \$44 million.

"This decision should be a wake-up call to the Office of Tax and Revenue that it better start following the law," Craig said. "... The inclination down there is to try to develop a method so they can do everything from a computer downtown and not bother to look at these houses."

Chief Financial Officer Natwar M. Gandhi, who oversees the Office of Tax and Revenue, declined to comment on "matters of continuing litigation," but he said the

See TAX, B10, Col. 1

### Dedication of BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport



### Pr. George's Man Pleads Guilty in Bribe Case

*Former County Worker*