

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire  
April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary  
Ward 7 Council - Dorothy Douglas**

**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?**

I am running because I have a track record of demonstrating accountability to my constituents, and that is what is needed in Ward 7. I will concentrate on establishing true transparency in government, improving fiscal responsibility, increasing living-wage employment opportunities, identifying creative ways to make housing and healthcare affordable for DC residents.

**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?**

Yes, I favor increasing safety net spending in future budgets. My priority would be to poverty-oriented programs and first source opportunities. I would restore the more than \$360,000 that the City Council rejected that would have given poverty-stricken families some relief. With first source agreements, I would enforce them, and promote an understanding of the policy to residents, so that they can take advantage of generated opportunities.

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

The District's budget is too small. For the amount of services the District provides for Federal Government affairs and the loss of revenue it experiences as a result of unfair income tax rules, DC needs more money in its budget.

**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?**

Yes. I believe the wealthier residents should contribute incrementally more into the budget, especially since tax benefits would most likely restore any difference in the tax rate that the person might experience.

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

All of Ward 7 is a great example of a revitalized community. The new shops, big ticket stores, office space, and eating establishments in Ward 7 are hiring local residents, providing them real chances at securing some of the affordable housing units in the Ward. Rebuilt and upgraded schools have popped up very recently, providing quality education to the local youth.

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

First of all, the 20 year waiting list for affordable housing needs to be addressed. I would have the various agencies that are supposed to address affordable housing issues create good databases to better manage their current cases. I would partner the agencies with community organizations to streamline and expedite the process.

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

No. With the current thrust to close schools and thus cut off opportunity for our children, reform in DC is misguided. We should be trying to systematically identify how to fix the schools, utilizing allocated resources to do so, and fix them.

**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.**

With the Charter School movement still very robust in DC, I would suggest that Charters and Private institutions be allowed to rent space from DC. Real estate is at a premium in the District, and therefore I do not think we should necessarily sell unused properties, unless compelling reasons to do so prevail. Additionally, programs can be operated in these repurposed spaces, by community-based organizations that seek a location in which to operate from.

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

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Soliciting, welcoming, and securing community engagement is the single most important step. I believe that the Council must attend to matters that affect public safety on Metro. We should facilitate consumer weigh-in on certain policy decisions before they are made. The Council can serve as an intermediary to determine what information demands public scrutiny before implementation.

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

I do support funding the DC Statehood Campaign. The amount of such an allocation would have to be determined each year, as the steps toward achieving that goal are addressed.

**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?**

No. Homeless, needy, and senior populations' interests are definitely underrepresented.

**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.**

Yes. It is definitely needed. I believe that this measure will save DC money through effective oversight of the budget, processes, and practices.

**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?**

This is a problem. DC should ban all corporate contributions.

**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 support CSFs. Those funds are for the residents in each Ward, that provide emergency assistance to needy families.

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

DC should develop a comprehensive training program, that includes developing job-shadowing opportunities with people on all levels of the government and city jobs. Developing and providing incentives to encourage employers and employees to participate in exhaustive training for would also improve the job-training programs in DC.