

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire  
April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary  
Ward 8 Council - Jacque Patterson**

**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 for Ward 8 City Council because I would like to be the agent of change that the Ward 8 Community needs. While the rest of the country has faced a national recession, Ward 8 has suffered Depression-level unemployment with 30% of its residents being unemployed. An area of priority that I will address during my term will be job creation to develop gainful employment for residents. Alongside job creation, other priority areas of focus will be workforce development, education reform, affordable housing, strengthening families, and addressing the concerns of our senior/elderly population and public safety.

**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?**

Ward 8 has been directly affected by the drastic rates of unemployment. It is also an area that is impacted by homelessness and economic distress. Financial resources should be directed to agencies such as Department of Employment Services (DOES) and also the Community College of DC (CCDC) which is in line with my focus on workforce development. And on that same note, we have got to get the Workforce Investment Council operational again. Currently it is dormant, but this is where investment needs to go so that we can train District residents to take advantage of the job market when the economy bounces back.

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

I actually consider the current budget to small. We are still a municipality that is stretched past its limits because of the federal government's presence. Multiple studies have been released, include by DC Appleseed where I sit on the Board of Directors, that speaks to the need of a payment in leu of taxes or some sort of

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government payment to address the budget imbalance. This imbalance but's a great stress on the services we can provide our residents.

**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?**

This isn't fair. We need a progressive tax structure that will fairly tax those at higher incomes.

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

I would have to take the opportunity to brag about my very own single member district 8B07. During the eight years that I was chair of ANC8B, we saw the development of THEARC, a 64,000 sq foot Giant Grocery Store, a sit down restaurant, two new mix-use affordable housing developments and the Andrew Federal Credit Union. We also supported the signing by a major developer of a 30 year contract to keep the number of subsidized apartment at 2001 level, thereby eliminating the effects of gentrification. All of this happened in a neighborhood in Ward 8. A success that has been lost in the negativity that is normally reported on.

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

As a current board member of the DC Housing Finance Agency, it's not about what I plan to do, but what I plan to continue to do. I was appointed to the board in 2008. Since that time, in Ward 8 alone, I have steered bond finance to the tune of nearly \$400 million dollars which in resulted in the construction or revitalization of over 7,000 affordable housing units for residents who make below 60% of the area

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medium income (AMI). To address the problem of homelessness, I chaired the meeting where we crafted the grant proposal to HUD that resulted in the awarding of \$20 million dollars to help residents who have lost their jobs during this economic recession from losing their homes to foreclosure. The program is called HomeSavers. Any District homeowner currently receiving unemployment benefits and apply for the program which will pay your mortgage up to about \$33,000 or about 12 months. I want to ensure residents who want to move into the District can afford a house and those who live in the District and keep their house.

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

I do think DCPS reform is headed in the right direction. I'm a big fan of Chancellor Henderson and look forward to working closely with her as a newly elected councilmember to defend the level of funding she fights for to ensure our schools become more effective in educating our children. I am also a public charter school supporter. I don't think we should continue to treat them as two different entities because at the end of the day, they are all our children, no matter where they attend school. Our youth need to have access to the resources that will enhance their educational performance. The quality of education can be improved by the revitalization of educational facilities that provide state of the art academia through technology and practical application of theories and skills.

**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.**

We should enforce the stipulations that provide charter schools to have first bid on surplus educational facilities. This has worked well with the Old Congress Heights School where Imagine Charter School has moved in, the former Douglass School where KIPP DC now resides, and Birney Elementary School where Excel Public Charter School and Septima Clark Public Charter School share the facility. And I can't forget the Old Nichols School on MLK Ave SE which is home to Thurgood Marshall Public Charter High School, one of the highest performing high schools

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in the city, and where my daughter graduated. Ward 8 has the highest number of school age children and it important to give our parents a choice of where they will send their kids as is provided in more affluent parts of the city. After all, deciding where a child will attend school is one of the most important choices they will make in that child's lifetime.

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

WMATA needs a more conducive funding stream. The current situation leaves the system underfunded. In a public transportation dependent ward like Ward 8, this has resulted in lines like the W4 to lose a number of buses used to service vital routes. Many times buses will have to bypass waiting customers because of overcrowding, even during non-rush hours. This has a rippling effect on other quality of life concerns that require residents to stay gainfully employed when they find a job and shop or get to various appointments.

**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 the funding of the DC Statehood Campaign in the 2013 budget. I won't put a dollar amount to it because there are a lot of obligations such as the rainy day fund, replenishing the DC Housing Production Trust, and ensuring we pay down our debt level that is still much too close to its respective limit for most credit rating agencies. But I look forward to crafting a formula that will ensure that an adequate yearly about is directed to this vital endeavor.

**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?**

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Although there is a cloud of unethical behavior hanging over the Council, I believe the Council still represents the interests of the broad public. But in saying that, I think some Wards, such as Ward 8 is underserved by its current councilmember, hence the reason I'm seeking to unseat him.

**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, I do support the creation of an independent ethics commission. It was quite obvious that politic played a part in most colleagues of former Councilmember Harry Thomas Jr. from calling for his resignation. Proving that the councilmembers are incapable of policing themselves. Residents desire public servants, not politicians, in leadership to have integrity, character and morals to protect their rights, interest, and livelihood and maintain the public trust.

**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'm not in favor of banning all corporate contribution unless the government is going to adopt a public fund similar to New York. I am opposed to bundling have committed to not participate in it. LLCs should not allow an individual to skirt the law by hiding their identity and giving about campaign limits for each individual. I would like to concentrate on the proliferation of contributions from LLCs as oppose to 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?**

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I support the use of Constituent Service Funds because I've seen how they can be used effectively and come in contact with residents who truly need the assistance. The current abuse by some councilmembers don't make the program bad, it means that tighter guidelines are needed. In a Ward with high unemployment and crime rate, CSFs are the difference between someone being able to keep their lights or receiving burial assistance. Not all Ward have the same level of need, so one thing we might look at, was asked with taxes, and is various levels of funds allowed depending on the social-economic indicators of the Ward. And strict guidelines of what CSF can be used on.

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

Regenerate the Workforce Investment Council and bring the CCDC under its jurisdiction. We have to start viewing community college more as a component of workforce development.