

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire
April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary
Ward 8 Council - Sandra Seegars**

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 can advance Ward 8 to where it should be. There are so many issues in Ward 8. The one that stands out is employment. I have a First Pay Day Loan Program. The main objective for this program is to provide funds for transportation.

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, the budget for safety net spending should be increased. The program that should be given priority is job readiness and job training programs, housing and childcare.

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

The budget is about right because we are functioning as a city, county and state.

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?

Raising taxes almost always seem unfair. I believe people who have the money really don't mind a temporary increase.

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

The revitalized neighborhood in Ward 8, would be Henson Ridge. I select this area because it was formerly public housing, but now it resembles other neighbors.

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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 and protect affordable housing, I would proffer that the money received from real property sales, be spent on housing.

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

When the parents stop complaining about the public schools, and the rush to attend charter school subsidies, is when public schools is headed in the right direction.

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.

I believe the school properties should be renovated for parenting centers. In Ward 8, we have Moton, McGogney and Turner.

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

To reform the WMATA, the government should stop aiding other companies, the Connector and streetcars, and put that money into the long running bus service.

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

To achieve statehood, the DC Government must provide significant funding. However, more important than funding is leadership.

I would support funding DC statehood. I would support a clause to pay residents a stipend for their lobbying efforts.

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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Overall, the public's interest is considered by the DC Council, but it doesn't mean the bill would benefit the public. The segments that are not represented as much is the middle class and the single adults.

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.

I would support an ethics commission, but it would have to have public members, not just members from the agencies who are under the purview of the mayor or council.

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?

City contractors should be prohibited from making contributions to campaigns. All corporate contributions should not be banned, but limited. Future legislation laws should address the amounts that can be contributed.

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?

Constituents Services Funds should continue. In Ward 8, the funds help residents with rent and utility bills. If misappropriated, the councilmember should be charged with misappropriation.

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

The government should do an assessment of all of the programs that offer training. It should continue to fund the ones who are performing and stop funding the ones who are not. There should be a stipend for the enrollees to provide transportation to and from the job-training program.