

**DC for Democracy Questionnaire
April 3, 2012 Democratic Primary
At-Large Council - Vincent Orange**

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 re-election to continue addressing ethics, employment, education, housing, healthcare and economic development.

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. Affordable housing through funding the housing production trust fund, homelessness and reducing unemployment.

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

The current dollars available for budget is about right. However, what is being funded is the problem.

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?

I believe it was unfair to raise taxes to generate \$106 million and not increase safety net spending. It was outrageous to raise that revenue and designate it for DC bondholders purchasing out of state bonds while enjoying a DC tax exemption from interest income. I propose that the designation be for the safety net.

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

Rhode Island Avenue Brentwood Road revitalization that includes Home Depot, Giant, Bank of America, TD Bank, 274 units of housing with 54 set aside for

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affordable housing, an additional 70,000 square feet of retail with 10% set aside for community opportunities. I pick this location because it replaced a salt dome, car impoundment lot and other undesirable uses. This revitalization provides jobs in the community.

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

Force DC government to live up to its commitment to build 55,000 affordable housing units which include 19,000 affordable apartments.

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

Yes. We must continue education reform to ensure our students have a curriculum and a modern learning environment to prepare for college and/or succeed in a competitive workforce.

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.

By being very careful.

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

New management, develop safety oriented culture and fund routine maintenance.

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. One million dollars to tell the nation about the injustice taking place in its front yard where all men are created equal according to the founding fathers.

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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No. The segment that believes “hard work pays” and crime does not.

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 support the laws of the District of Columbia. The law established an independent ethics commission. During the debate, I supported another viewpoint. However, the matter is settled. There will be an independent ethics commission.

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?

How could anyone advocate this position while allowing DC Councilmembers to hold outside employment with these same organizations? DC should ban outside employment by DC Councilmembers.

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?

Yes. Because people are suffering and the proper use of these funds can help reduce the pain being felt by so many.

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

Hire a Job Czar, train residents to the jobs becoming available and then hire them to do the job. We have 35,000 unemployed. We will create 50,000 jobs over the next decade. Train to the jobs and then employ the people to work those jobs.