

DC for Democracy Questionnaire
April 2014 Primary, At-Large (Democrat)
John Settles

1. **1. Given the strong economic and population growth in recent years, we can all agree that this city is now a hot place to live and work. Going forward, what criteria should justify the use of DC taxpayer funds for economic development?**

The criteria should be the creation of permanent, living wage jobs for District residents, the creation and maintenance of affordable housing or expanding existing or new businesses, especially east-of-the-river and low-to moderate-income neighborhoods.

2. **The tipped minimum wage has been frozen at \$2.77/hr in DC for over 20 years. Meanwhile, the Minimum Wage Act left out the issue of tipped minimum wages. Would you support an increase in the tipped minimum wage, and to what level?**

Yes. I believe everyone deserves a living wage.

3. **The Tax Revision Commission was presented with clear, official data showing that the District's current tax system is regressive. The Commission has recommended some proposals to reduce this regressivity. Are you comfortable with their proposals in this regard? What further changes would you propose, if any?**

I'm comfortable with the Commission's recommendations. I would just like see an education tax credit for low- to moderate-income families. Additionally, I would like to see a new tax bracket, because the \$60,000 to \$200,000 tax bracket is too large. I'd like to see some type of relief for those making at or under \$85,000

4. **DC has a reputation as a high-tax jurisdiction that drives investment and wealthy families out of the District. In reality, how big a problem is this?**

I don't think it's a huge problem, except maybe for empty nesters, who can live here up to five months 29 days and domicile elsewhere.

5. **In order to reduce the influence of large contributors on legislation, a number of states and localities have turned to public financing. Do you in general favor public financing, and if so, what model(s) do you recommend?**

Yes. I believe it's a major conflict of interest for corporations doing business with the city to donate and the influence peddling is harming small and local businesses and negatively impacting job creation in the District.

6. **The electoral system in DC allows candidates to be elected to office with a plurality, not a majority, of votes. Do you support any type of runoff system of voting? If yes, what mechanism do you favor? If not, why not?**

I support an instant runoff.

DC for Democracy Questionnaire
April 2014 Primary, At-Large (Democrat)
John Settles

7. **Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie has introduced a bill (Disposition of District Land for Affordable Housing Amendment Act of 2013), which includes a requirement that private developments on surplused public lands with transit access (. mile of metro station or . mile of major bus route/ streetcar line) to provide at least 30% of rental units to be set aside for very-low to low-income households. Would you support this bill? Why or why not?**

I support the use of surplus land to address the affordable housing crisis, setting aside 20 percent for very low- to low-income and the other 10 percent for low- to moderate-income.

8. **The percentage of children in traditional public schools has declined dramatically in DC and is now, at 56%, the third lowest in the nation. Should we be concerned about this trend? If so, what should be done to halt or reverse it? If not, what changes would you propose to accommodate to the trend?**

Yes. We should be very concerned about the percentage of children in traditional public schools. I propose collaboration and cooperation between DCPS and charters, versus competition. We must also expand the number of high quality seats in schools across the city.

9. **What would you do to improve job and living prospects for the high number of returning citizens in DC?**

I believe we should invest in traditional housing that includes technologically advanced training facilities to provide housing and training opportunities for ex-offenders. I also advocate for a paid training and apprentice program for ex-offenders. I would like to see the city pilot one of these programs with their surplus budget funds for 500 to 1,000 people.