

ECONOMY & JOBS

1. The District of Columbia is currently implementing an economic development strategy that defines as one of its goals being the most business-friendly economy in the nation. What do you think of this goal, and how would you revise it, if at all?

As the Chair of the Council's Economic Development Committee, I am well-versed in the District's development strategy. Being business-friendly to me means providing tax relief for District-based businesses, smoothing the way for small businesses (especially in terms of DCRA permitting), and providing a prepared workforce. The District of Columbia should be in the business of providing opportunities for our residents to prepare themselves for the technology-based economy of the future. My DC STEM Fund legislation will provide grants to non-profits to train DC residents of all ages in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math. As mayor, I would refocus the mission of the Department of Small and Local Business Development to focus on helping District businesses get access to bonding and capital.

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 support raising the tipped minimum wage to 80% of the minimum wage by 2018.

TAXATION

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 support tax relief for DC residents and businesses. Increased revenue will allow us to offset many of these initiatives. I am particularly interested in the idea of creating a middle-income tax bracket.

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?

Businesses and families are moving into the District of Columbia at an increasing rate. The problem they have faced is an unpredictable tax structure. Businesses need to be able to plan their tax obligations ahead of time. The Deputy Mayor of Planning and Economic Development should take an active role in recruitment and retention of businesses. I am pleased that we have a strong tax base, but we need to ensure that our tax system is fair at all levels.

ELECTION REFORM

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?

I do not favor public financing for Washington, DC. I favor transparency for donors, and a more engaged Office of Campaign Finance.

6. How do you define affordable housing? What are your priorities short-term and longer-term, for remedying the affordable housing crisis in the District?

There is indeed an affordable housing crisis in the District. In the short-term, I support setting aside at least \$100 million per year to help add to the number of units available to those living at or below 50% of poverty, and those between 50% and 80% of poverty. I am also considering how we can include this funding in our baseline budget annually.

I have a three part strategy for a long-term solution: create more affordable units, preserve more existing affordable units, and provide skills training and other supports so District residents can afford more housing.

The District of Columbia must have housing options for all income levels, and our new construction and renovations cannot only be for the wealthy. I have worked to ensure that senior citizens can stay in their homes, despite the rise in their property values. I have proposed programs to train workers in the STEM fields that are becoming a larger part of our economy. I strongly support inclusionary zoning and fully funding the Housing Production Trust Fund.

EDUCATION

7. 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?

My concern regarding the declining percentage of students in DCPS schools is that many children are traveling farther and farther from their neighborhoods for high quality education. I have proposed requiring charter schools to provide a neighborhood preference, so students have a better chance at staying close to home. I am also focused on improving our middle school offerings to take the growing pressure off Alice Deal and provide more options that are accessible to all areas of the District. As we speed up and spread out school reform, I am confident that students will have great options for public schools near their homes, whether DCPS or charter schools.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

8. Racial disparities in arrests and convictions for marijuana possession in DC are well known.

Efforts to decriminalize or legalize marijuana are underway in multiple states today. What are your views on these two policy options?

I voted to decriminalize marijuana possession in DC in order to help alleviate some of the racial disparity in arrests and convictions. More work must be done to regulate and tax the sale of marijuana.

ENVIRONMENT

9. A provision in Mayor Gray's "Sustainable DC Omnibus Act of 2013" abolishes the Advisory Board of the Sustainable Energy Utility (SEU), an entity designed to administer energy efficiency and renewable energy programs. The board was created in the 2008 Clean and Affordable Energy Act to provide advice and recommendations regarding the procurement and administration of the Utility.

How would you define the role of citizens participating in the design of policies and communication of information regarding environmental resources in the city?

My commitment to transparency and open government is well known. As with all executive branch agencies, I will hold DDOE accountable to the public, and that includes their contractors such as the SEU. My administration will require public notices of meetings and changes to established policies. I will ask the public to weigh in on budget priorities before I submit a budget to the Council. And, I will work to maintain DC's status among the most environmentally-friendly cities in the nation.