

DC for Democracy Endorsement Form

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1. Tragic local incidents have shown us the need for more leveraging of public economic development dollars to benefit the District's neediest residents. An example of that can be seen with the case of Relisha Rudd. Relisha was a low-income student who lived in DC General with her mother, her boyfriend and brothers. She was absent from school more days than the law should allow and her mother missed several appointments with her caseworker at the Department of Health and Human Services. Her tragedy is an example of the consequences of inadequate support, investment, and oversight. Low-income families such as Relisha's are impacted greater significantly and her tragedy demonstrates the need for additional funds invested into social program to help these families during the roughest of times of their lives. Instead of having Relisha living in a homeless shelter, the District should have a housing production trust fund, where public land is used to give families like hers affordable housing. The government should aide her family in a path to permanent housing and job opportunities such as first source which promotes employers in the District hiring the neediest of resident's employment to help maintain a healthy lifestyle. Assisting families like Relisha's is a way to stronger communities and making sure that there is a plan to aid the neediest of families' and bolster opportunities for more to live the American dream.

2. At this time, there is no exact wage amount proposed that would move D.C. residents out of poverty. National studies have shown that full-time workers would have to make nearly \$30.00 to pay for a two-bedroom apartment to consider a family of four. The discussion of raising the minimum wage is important but we must have a greater conversation about truly moving our residents out of poverty. We need to create ladders of success to help residents achieve the goal of economic success. We need to create and sustain jobs, supporting local businesses and demanding local hiring in our investments. Lastly, we should invest and further affordable housing so that DC isn't out of reach for middle and working families.

3. The Council was faced with several recommendations from the Tax Revision Commission. I am opposed to the assessment of a "Gym Tax" to hard working district residents who are trying to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Over the last several years, nationally, and locally, we have put an increased emphasis on preventive, accessible health care. That measure goes in the opposite direction. District residents understand that it is a necessary means to generate revenue for the

city, it arguably more important for these funds to be utilized to positively impact our residents and neighborhoods and communities. Developing the city's infrastructure, roads, improving schools and assisting the neediest of low-income families are effective and great use of funds. When elected to the Council, I will fight for residents to see their tax dollars used in a way the benefits their everyday life. These funds should go back into the community to create better services for residents.

4. I am proud that I had the privilege to work on the McCain Feingold Bill and opposed Citizens United during my years in the labor movement. This was a big step in the fight of publicly ending corporate financing of legislation in elections. I strongly believe that the District of Columbia would benefit from public financing, and should look at models, such as one used recently in the New York City (NYC) Mayoral election and promoted by the DeBlasio Administration.

In NYC, each dollar that a donor gives to a candidate for office, up to \$175, is matched by six dollars in public funds. So, for instance, if a candidate has 20 people that donate \$100 each, it becomes a total of \$14,000 which is creates a benchmark of donations. Though not perfect, this model looks to ensure that big business are not running the elections. The people are actively voicing their needs, wants, and concerns in an effective manner.

5. As an SEIU community organizer, I have seen people turned away from the polls from across the country. It is important that the District use a model that would not infringe on the rights of the electorate. I believe the District should change to the Instant Runoff Voting Model (IRV). Of course, prior to making this change, the District must study and investigate prior to implementing and changes. The IRV model would increase a sense of transparency that would ease the minds of voters and is the most efficient means of voting.

6. There is a strong base for creating more affordable housing. We can work to meet this threshold by ensuring that 50% of unrestricted surpluses go into the Housing Production Trust Fund. We must work with local banks to ensure that tenants who opt to assert their rights of first of refusal have access to the capital to preserve affordable housing. We must also make sure that tenants are not bullied in the process of asserting their first rights and miss an opportunity to buy their home. Essentially, tenants must be protected and educated about their rights and opportunities that exist regarding affordable housing.

7.The District of Columbia was one of the first jurisdictions who created rent control laws and rent stabilization programs to aid residents in obtaining affordable housing. Many of those older buildings are now having their 20 year agreements expire, which in turn is causing long-term residents to potentially become priced out of their home. The District needs to re-evaluate and create current adequate laws as previously done which has previously aided residents with the need to afford housing with the current boom in housing costs. Residents do not deserve this sort of displacement due to the expiration of this program that has helped so many. This epidemic can be avoided if we as a city take the approach of looking at set asides, and create a growth planning strategy to accommodate the many of these residents.

8.As a father of two small children, I focus on the positive rather than the negative. While the percentage of D.C. children attending traditional public schools has decreased since 1960, it is currently on a strong upward spike. I support traditional public schools and have seen recent improvements made to improve the quality of education of students, recruit great talent, and address truancy. Further, I am an advocate for neighborhood schools. These schools anchor communities and can serve as a gathering place for residents. It is important that ALL students have access to a great education no matter where they live in the District. If elected to Council, I pledge to work with education stakeholders to introduce proposals that improve D.C. education, especially in our neighborhood schools.

9. The past two Mayors have relied heavily on the St. Elizabeth's development to revive east of the river. I visited this development site two weeks ago, and I can wholeheartedly state that we cannot rely on one project to create, maintain, or sustain opportunities for economic development for residents east of the river. There needs to be comprehensive development in the area, where residents can shop, work, and sit down and eat as others who reside west of the river. As we all know, this area of the city is not developing as quickly as other parts of the city. It is not fair to those hardworking tax paying residents, that they are not afforded opportunities to increase their livelihoods. As a member of the Council, I will plan to work with developers and residents east of the river to see developments come and thrive.

10.As a government entity, there is always room for improvement on how the executive and legislative branch work together to handle oversight. In regard to zoning, I think the current structure of

reporting for Zoning, planning and historic preservation can be modified to allow more participation from District residents. In its current structure, DMPED and the Council have a hearing for residents to sign up and testify. I believe residents --more specifically those affected -- should have additional opportunities to discuss and meet with Executive's zoning, planning and historic preservation. It is important for residents to be a part of the process and have their voices heard.