



2015 Ward 4 Special Election Questionnaire

1. PUBLIC FINANCING

A number of jurisdictions provide public financing to political campaigns who meet certain requirements. The campaign must receive small donations (as low as \$5 per person) from a specified minimum number of individuals. In addition, candidates must agree to certain conditions (for example, limits on how much their campaign may spend, limits on how much any individual may donate, and a ban on contributions from corporations and political action committees).

As a Councilmember would you vote to establish such a system in DC? Why or why not?
Of course I would vote for any campaign to receive small donations. As a native Washingtonian I have found that there has always been a community spirit for democracy and equity in an election. In 1971 when late Council Member Marion Barry visited McKinley Technical High School and spoke to a student body of 1000 students enrolled at that time to vote there was hope. I have never missed voting since that time. Residents of the District of Columbia must have voice in any election. Voters should not have limited choices when they are faced with any election. Contributions from corporations and some political action groups should be monitored.

2. BANNING PAY TO PLAY

In the current Council period, Chairman Mendelson has introduced the Contractor Pay-to-Play Elimination Amendment Act of 2015. Instead of using the conventional approach of banning contractors from donating to campaigns, the bill would ban donors from receiving government contracts.

2a) As a Councilmember, will you vote in favor of this legislation?

Yes, this would eliminate the corruption in many of the contracts that have flourished in DC government.

2b) What have you done in the past to limit the influence of monied interests in DC government?

I am a retired District of Columbia educator that fought for equity in school funds that were designated to go to students. Many of the contracts for community service that have been designed to serve students in schools were never used for this purpose. In many cases I have fought with parents on the LSRT to question many of these funds.

3. STATEHOOD



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When it comes to statehood, politicians and public officials are often long on rhetoric and nearly absent when it comes to doing the work required.

What is the most significant action you have taken to promote the cause of statehood, and how do you plan to advance the cause as Councilmember?

I have donated to the National Democratic Party, and with my donations I have written letters for these funds to help in the cause for DC statehood. As a Councilmember I will defend our Ward 4 against the many outside interest that destroys our ability to insure our citizens an equal share to employment, affordable housing, and education.

4. HOUSING

Mayor Bowser has committed to adding \$100 million to the Housing Production Trust Fund in this year's budget.

4a) Do you stand with the Mayor in her commitment?

I would want it to be increased to \$200 million because the housing market in Ward 4 has skyrocketed. Not too many young people at the present income level of \$30,000 or less can afford housing in Ward 4. There needs to be more money in the Housing Production Trust Fund to extend more funds to more residents.

When this \$100 million Housing Production Trust Fund is available to residents there is a need for Ward 4 residents to know how to obtain this funding. There should be additional education and community outreach for residents of Ward 4 to obtain these funds. Transparency should be the goal of the DC government for all residents to gain affordable housing through the Housing Production Trust Fund. DHCD does have a wonderful program where they provide housing counseling services. This type of service should also be provided at other facilities such as libraries, schools and recreational centers.

4b) Are there any circumstances under which you would vote for a budget that does not include the additional \$100 million? If so, please be specific.

Housing is a human right, and I would not vote for not having at least \$100 million in the Housing Trust Fund.

5. POLICE

The DCFerguson movement was formed to oppose invasive police tactics, particularly jumpouts, targeted to communities of color. DCFerguson demands that the DC Council pass a



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resolution taking a stand against the use of jumpout squads. See the DCFerguson petition for details: <https://www.change.org/p/councilmember-phil-mendelson-take-a-stand-against-jump-out-squads-in-washington-d-c>

5a) Have you signed the petition linked above? If not, please explain.

5b) Would you support the Council holding a public roundtable on jumpouts?

Yes, I would be very interested to be part of this round table.

6. JOBS

What have you done specifically to help create good jobs with good benefits for Ward 4 residents? If elected, will you introduce/co-sponsor legislation such as [San Francisco's "Retail Workers Bill of Rights"](#) to give workers greater control over their schedules and promote worker education and training?

Yes, many of the retail businesses have not given minorities, and women the type of employment to raise a family. Irregular hours, and the lack of health care limits the ability for family stability. In turn this can destroy the building of any community. I would be the first to introduce or co-sponsor legislation such as San Francisco's "Retail Workers Bill of Rights" to give workers greater control over their schedules.

Secondly, I have been an educator for over 32 years training young adults at McKinley Technical School, Coolidge and Roosevelt STAY in Environmental Science, Chemistry, and STEMS education. Many of my students have obtain degrees and are gainfully employed.

7. INCOME INEQUALITY

While income inequality is far more than just a local issue, Washington has been ranked fourth highest among major cities in the country in the size of the income gap between upper and lower income residents. Do you think this broad income disparity is an issue the Council can and should address? If so, why, and what specific proposals/steps do you think should be considered? If not, why?

Income inequality is the number one problem that we face in Ward 4. There is over a 7.9 unemployment rate for minorities in this ward. Education is one of the first problems that can be addressed, not only in Ward 4 but across the city. The Walter Reed Facility would be a perfect place to train residents in many of the medical fields, such as forensic research, medical assistants, environmental research, and pharmacology. The medical facility that is presently located at Walter Reed is perfect place. Making use of this facility will allow residents meaningful training for young adults with full employment and benefits.

8. DISPLACEMENT



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What specific strategies would you endorse as a Councilmember to prevent displacement of residents and businesses in Ward 4 neighborhoods (like 16th Street Heights and Petworth) that are presently experiencing development pressure?

I would work with all present occupants to establish financing with DHCD and other financial institutions to help tenants buy the building and establish a cooperative. Educational programs should be provided and monitored for all tenants that have the desire and the finances to become an occupant.