



2015 Ward 4 Special Election Questionnaire
Leon Andrews

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?

Yes, we want to continue to have open and fair election process to allow everyone to have a chance to participate.

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, we want to continue to have open and fair election process to allow everyone to have a chance to participate. I am in favor of all legislation that ensures we have a fair and ethical process. At the end of the day, it is important that the will of people is heard and not just special interest. I am always worried about loopholes in legislation that still continues to find opportunities for donors with resources to have the advantage in a democratic process. I will fight for all residents in Ward 4 and the City to have the same access to the democratic process than anyone else.



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

3. STATEHOOD

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 believe in DC Statehood. I think any municipality has the right to govern itself and pay its fair share of taxes and enjoy the benefits of being a state. As the District of Columbia, we remain a city with no rights, privileges or protections under the law. As a Councilmember, I would work diligently with the Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton to advance an agenda that she has been shaping tirelessly in the halls of Congress. I would also rally and support those in the city that champion DC Statehood.

The most significant action I've taken to date, in my capacity as professor at Eastern Michigan University (2002- 2005), I strongly advocated that students write their congressmen and senators to vote in favor of DC statehood. Over the course of my three years teaching, I reached over 300 students.

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? **Yes. The current legislation is for \$100 million. I would also support a budget that increases this amount judiciously, because \$100 million is still under-funded. I would support a budget that increases this amount and puts restrictions in place to make sure the fund is not misused.**

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.



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I would vote for a budget that includes the Housing Production Trust Fund. I believe it needs to be funded annually. I would look to see if we could use city reserve funds and consider additional options. This is a priority - economic prosperity must be for everyone. Affordable housing is taking on new meaning in our city right now. It's not just about where it will be or how it will be maintained or even holding landlords to a fair standard of accommodation, maintenance and service. Thriving communities have all kinds of housing options that meet the needs of everyone. We will have to find a balanced plan that makes housing affordable for everyone: from seniors to young families. As development comes in and other changes take place all over the city, we have to make sure that no one is locked out of the prosperity that change brings especially as it relates to something as basic as housing. We also must be diligent about holding housing operators fully accountable to residents and the city. As a councilmember I would absolutely support all efforts to age in place. While we are mindful of elder abuse and neglect that must never be tolerated, we must be diligent in strong oversight of senior facilities to assure cleanliness and attentive care. Yet for those who can safely stay at home, I firmly believe that they should be able given every consideration and accommodation to do so.

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 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. **Thanks for letting me know about the petition. I've just signed. We, as citizens, should be outraged at the number of stories heard from residents of how they are being treated. These complaints can't continue to be ignored. If the chief insists that police are not the ones who are jumping out, then we have a problem that others are doing and the police are not responding. Either way I believe jump outs are occurring and needs to stop.**

5b) Would you support the Council holding a public roundtable on jumpouts? **Absolutely, this policy needs to end. A roundtable discussion would be helpful in bringing broader attention to the problem. It's imperative that the police chief acknowledges this is occurring and comes to understand the magnitude of the problem. Whereas I am in favor**



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of a roundtable meeting that will provide a forum for discussion and bear witness to the incidents that have occurred, I will also push for concrete action that can result from this meeting.

I also support a Civilian Review Board that provide real accountability and have the ability to discipline officers- up to and including termination. I also believe in a community policing model that is not just about arresting but walking the neighborhood, knowing the neighbors, and creating an atmosphere that transforms how the police sees the community and how the community sees the police.

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 I agree with supporting worker flexibility, training, and protections for shift workers and would support the passing of similar legislation to San Francisco's retail workers bill of rights here in DC

Our residents must be prepared to enter the workforce and secure employment that earn them a livable wage, thereby contributing to the economic growth of Ward 4. As councilmember, I will support investment in evidence-based job training, apprenticeships, and vocational education in our schools and community organizations, which will offer opportunities for many youth, young adults and dislocated workers to have pathways to prosperity.

In my current capacity at the National League of Cities, I've worked with Mayor Fenty's, Mayor Gray's and now with Mayor Bowser's administration to implement evidence based programs that bring job skills training, like Youth Build, to ensure that young adults and dislocated workers have opportunities to pursue pathways toward a livable wage.

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?



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Income disparity is an issue in Ward 4 and has resulted in preventing everyone from taking advantage of the economic prosperity. This is an issue that can be addressed by the Council. The changes we are seeing in our Ward and the City often results in higher tax revenues and increased property values but it also prices long-time residents out of their homes with unaffordable rent and purchase price increases. Many seniors and young families cannot afford to live in the Ward. As councilmember, I will address housing preservation and the ability to “age in place” as top priorities.

8. DISPLACEMENT

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?

As Councilmember, I will advocate for policies and work with developers to ensure housing protection for residents displaced by the large development projects that are proliferating throughout ward 4. It is also important to reenergize the base of small business owners so that they have input and are included in development projects happening in certain business corridors in our ward.

As development comes in and other changes take place all over the city, we have to make sure that no one is locked out of the prosperity that change brings. To that end, I intend to convene forums to discuss residents and businesses concerns as it relates to development changes. It would be my job as Councilmember to listen and advocate on behalf of my Ward 4 neighbors and introduce legislation that honors their priorities.