



2015 Ward 8 Special Election Questionnaire

Keita Vanterpool

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?

It is far better, I believe for a large number of citizens to influence an election with individual contributions than for a few special interests to dominate. However, individuals (including Chiropractors and members of other organizations) do not have the wherewithal to pay the entire bill for election campaigns. Hence, I favor public supplements to individual contributions. Matching programs in New York and Connecticut are worth our consideration.

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?

Chairman Mendelson's reform is certainly worth considering as this bill to restrict those who make large donations from receiving DC contracts or other benefits — for about a year after their candidate's election to office. This approach surely would discourage contributions from those whose motivation was gaining special access to contracts or other government largess.

Perhaps the most important ethics reform is for the people of DC to raise up against ethical violations and government officials who use their positions to benefit themselves and their friends. The success of reform-oriented campaigns in recent elections has shown that the people of DC are expecting and demanding ethics reform.

2b) What have you done in the past to limit the influence of monied interests in DC government?
My position has remained working in an underserved community and no being able to be compensated under Medicaid for the work I do as a chiropractor, however, I spearheaded the cause for its inclusion working with former At-Large David Catania, CM Alexander and other



2015 Ward 8 Special Election Questionnaire

stakeholders in the creation of Bills 20-174 which will come up reintroduction in the new Mayors term. I proactively engage in causes to protect the public, promote transparency and equality.

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?

None to date but do see opportunities to sponsor and participate in Ward 8 –based forums on Statehood. In addition, I will support funding for our Statehood efforts, including support for our delegation of Shadow Senators and Shadow Representatives.

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?

Absolutely, but the needs are greater than \$100 million. The waiting list has been shut down due to the extreme backlog. The housing crisis is severe and we must be diligent in our efforts to make safe, affordable housing available... Yesterday!

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.

No.



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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.

Tried to but did not go through.

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

Yes

6. JOBS

What have you done specifically to help create good jobs with good benefits for Ward 8 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.

As a small business owner in Ward 8, I have made a commitment to train and hire local residents. Our office also served as a training ground for medical externs providing an opportunity to learn skills in a chiropractic office. We had a 4.5 work week at 36 hours with a 2.5 lunch break, a mental health day and paid well over minimum wage after 1.5 years of service.

It is important to establish a healthy work culture that encourages growth with respect and dignity. A healthy worker is a happy worker and increases your bottom line making it a win-win for all.

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?

Yes.

I support an increase in minimum wage. If billion dollar corporations want to do business in the District, they should be prepared to pay our residents fair wages with benefits. Our residents must be prepared for the jobs that are coming into the District. This not only boosts the economy but reduces disparities that exist and assists residents in becoming independent, finding affordable housing and to establish themselves in being productive citizens in society.

I support proposals to establish a minimum wage toward the \$13 within the next few years, with raises of about \$1 per hour each year. After that, the increases should be more gradual, for



2015 Ward 8 Special Election Questionnaire

example ~~half~~ ~~a~~ dollar per hour per year, until workers reach the \$15 level. Then increases to adjust for inflation should continue each year.

8. DISPLACEMENT

Sanford Capital is seeking permission to demolish properties by the Congress Heights Metro and replace them with luxury apartments. The tenants have organized the Alabama Avenue/ 13th Street Tenants Coalition to buy the properties and form a housing cooperative. What have you done to date to help the tenants, and how will you help them if elected Councilmember?
I have attendedk ANC meetings in Congress Heights and had the opportunity to address the developers on key issues relating to the infrastructure (water, electricity, gas, roads access ect...) and the impact it will have on the residents living in the community. I have also brought up their responsibility and expectation while enhancing the community giving back to ensure our children have proper spaces for recreation and good job creation for local Ward 8 residents.

I stand with the residents that any developer that comes in our neighborhoods will have to promise jobs, affordable housing and or other opportunities for Ward 8 residents to have a stakehold in. A huge proponent of access to information. I will hold townhall meetings with residents and various community groups to ensure our office has the information needed to be proactive in our apporach to protecting our residents stay, to build and enhance our neighborhoods.