



Questionnaire for 2016 General Election

Position Sought:

US Delegate for DC

Candidate Name:

Martin Moulton

The New Columbia Statehood Commission has proposed a Statehood Initiative that calls for an Advisory Referendum that includes approval of a new Constitution and boundaries to be adopted by the DC Council. If you had designed the Statehood Initiative, would it be different in any way, and if so, how?

If I had been involved with the Statehood Initiative, I would have excluded or disqualified lawyers, lobbyists and writers from big-monied special interest groups from having lead positions in drafting the Constitution and provided for general public access or input instead. This is something astoundingly simple to do in our internet age and with most District residents living within a short distance of a DC Public Library or Recreation Center with online access or having handy access to mobile devices. Online polls are ubiquitous.

I would have made the entire process transparent according to current DC board and commission standards which recommend that all meetings be recorded by audio or audible video, saved publicly online, and have all written notes made public online — perhaps in some online blog format or read-only Google.doc — without requiring any citizen to file a FOIA request to obtain access to review the notes and emails. The Commission based their process on old outdated practices which effectively excluded more people than they could have easily served and engaged.

I would have urged having publicly elected delegates to the Constitutional Convention to provide serious, thoughtful, meaningful, lasting and official input.

I would have encouraged all Advisory Neighborhood Commission (ANC) chairs across the District publicly verbally announce local meeting related to the Constitutional Convention, during their public meetings and in any print or online media they produce — well in advance of any meeting in or near their District. I might even have initiated a process for each ANC Board to elect a delegate to the Constitutional Convention to provide representation from more diverse communities.

The new state map and map of the redefined Federal City should have been defined with greater scrutiny, logic and care. Perhaps walks and/or bike rides to tour the new boundaries should have been organized with all elected officials and any community member who wanted to participate.

At a minimum, the draft Constitution should have explicitly indicated that the position of Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General would be independently elected offices.

I would want voters to have more of a say in a modern Bill of Rights that would include allowing citizens to have standing in Federal Court to sue the Federal government for criminal abuses, fraud and misuse of taxpayer dollars.

The ballot referendum language should be simplified by having the elected delegates to the Constitutional Convention vote with a majority deciding on details relating to a language about a “representative form of government,” “the new proposed Federal District boundaries.” and “ratifying the state constitution” all so that the only decision the voters would need to address on the ballot in November is “Yes” or “No” for DC Statehood.

For the District’s leading Democrats to myopically plan only for the expectation of Democrats controlling the Congress and the White House is utterly ridiculous given the current make up of Congress and the unprecedented dislike of the leading party candidates for POTUS. More consideration must be given to engage both sides of the aisle and all political parties and independents who will be voting in November and those represented on the November ballot: Democrats, Republicans, Greens and Libertarians. DC Statehood is not a partisan issue and discussions from leaders shouldn’t be hampered by and rigged with polarizing political dog whistles.

Instead of wasting time and money on a short sighted process, which might not even gain full Democrat approval — given outcomes in 1993 and 2008/9 campaigns for DC Statehood — the Commission should have planned for a long game that intelligently anticipated that support from Democrats, Republicans and others would be critical for success.

Libertarians would cut through the polarizing politics which prevent success and the special interests often rig the system and undermine outcomes that would benefit citizens. Gun regulation is historically polarizing, but Libertarians realize that — just as in peaceful nations like Costa Rica where all citizens are permitted to lawfully carry firearms — law abiding gun ownership does not disintegrate or harm public safety. Education can be polarizing, but most, if not all, parents would like to have the most convenient process available to give their student children the best quality education available. Reproductive health care politics, mired in bureaucracy, ignore the fact that — outside of criminal sexual assaults — most people don’t want to be legally responsible for paying for the personal voluntary behaviors of others; nonetheless, many would voluntarily donate to organizations who provide reproductive health care if asked. Issues like these should never be mentioned by discussion leaders when focussing like a laser on providing democracy and civil and equal rights to the residents of the Nation’s Capital of the 20th* leading democracy on earth.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Martin Moulton

2016 Libertarian Candidate for US Delegate for the District of Columbia

* https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democracy_Index#Democracy_index_by_country_.282015.29