



**“We are only as strong as a city as the ward that struggles the most. You cannot represent the District of Columbia as a whole and not reflect that in your words, actions, and budget decisions.” -Mayor Muriel Bowser, January 2nd,**

**2019**

Walking around with any native Washingtonian, you will often hear repeated some variation of the phrase, “this city has changed.” You can play, “what was here before those condos” and see who can remember that carry-out or this church, that neighbor’s house or this neighborhood bar.

“Affordable” has been replaced by “luxury,” “mom and pop” with “national chain,” “local” with “transient.” The city has changed faster than many of us can keep track of. Businesses come and go in the blink of an eye. You can leave town and return home to a brand new skyline.

Today, in our nation’s capital, luxury condominiums with pet spas, waterfalls, and yoga studios overlook intake centers for homeless families and encampments filled with entire communities supporting each other through their shared experience of homelessness and displacement.

As we enter Mayor Muriel Bowser’s second term, the DC Fair Budget Coalition calls upon this administration to **Put People First**. Before the District gives our revenue to wealthy corporations and individuals and economic development projects that do not yield quality jobs for our residents, we put Community Safety, Economic Justice, Housing Security, Food Equity, Healthcare and Fair Taxes and Public Deals first on the agenda.

We will measure the success of your term by the material improvement in the lives and communities in the wards who are struggling the most. We will not consider it success if DC builds a new stadium for the Washington Football Team while thousands remain homeless.

We will not consider it success if DC builds 36,000 new units of housing over the next ten years and only a small percentage is affordable to people living on extremely low incomes.

If we see an influx of hundreds of new residents but continue to see the forced migration of Black and other communities of color, we will not consider it a success.

Success looks like the creation of community-owned, full service grocery stores, without the displacement of the neighborhood. It looks like families having adequate housing when they are trying to find safety from abuse. It means a school system in which a Black child is not suspended from school for the same behavior exhibited by their white peer, who goes without punishment. It’s immigrant families being able to rely on their healthcare provider without needing to deal with a bureaucracy every six months. And it means ensuring that our young people in school have adequate access to mental healthcare when they need it.

The DC Fair Budget Coalition has compiled a list of initiatives that the District must prioritize in this year’s budget to help move us towards addressing the social, racial, and economic disparities that plague our region. The Coalition has outlined our position on several policies and programs that we believe need to be implemented urgently. The Coalition established guiding principles and values to determine which programs and policies were supported, in addition to engaging community residents and our members in issue specific education and voting.

The needs of District residents far surpass what is outlined in this report. These investments must be accompanied by bold ideas that create structural change to address the root causes of poverty.

The status quo cannot continue. The District must honor its commitments to its residents and make faster, more efficient and effective progress toward equity and justice