

**FAIR BUDGET**  
≥ COALITION



# **DC COUNCIL CANDIDATE SPECIAL REPORT**



# FAIR BUDGET ≥ COALITION

Fair Budget Coalition (FBC) is a nonpartisan coalition of member organizations and community members. As part of our mission to advance a just and equitable DC budget, we have developed a candidate questionnaire aligned with our Budget Platform and the priorities of our seven Policy Issue Committees. As a 501(c)(3) organization, Fair Budget Coalition does not endorse or oppose candidates. This questionnaire is conducted solely for nonpartisan voter education purposes, consistent with legal guidelines.

The questionnaire covers key areas affecting District residents, and the candidate's responses is intended to help our members and the broader public better understand where candidates stand on the issues that shape our city's investments. All candidates for the DC Council seats received the same questionnaire. Their responses are published here and shared with the public in their entirety to promote an informed electorate.

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## Why you can trust this scorecard

The Fair Budget Coalition is a people-first organization. We are not a think tank or a consulting firm. We are a coalition of about 60 member organizations and more than 90 individual members rooted in the communities most affected by DC's budget choices.

This scorecard reflects that grounding. The questions you see were drafted with input from a broad coalition of partners who told us what they needed to know about every candidate seeking their vote. Those questions were then sharpened by our Civic Power Working Group, a body of FBC members who are well-versed in electoral strategy and accountability work.

## Why should DC residents be civically engaged?

Washingtonians must be civically engaged, because the alternative is to be governed by people who do not have to live with the consequences.

DC is the only place in America where more than 700,000 taxpaying citizens watch a Congress they did not elect overturn laws their neighbors fought to pass. DC is the only place in America where a federal shutdown can paralyze local services that have nothing to do with the federal government. We are the living embodiment of taxation without representation. This is exactly why your civic engagement matters.

When you vote in a DC Council race, you are not just choosing a person. You are deciding whose name gets attached to the bill that funds the program that keeps your neighbor housed. You are deciding which budget priorities make it to the Wilson Building and which ones die quietly in committee. Your vote in this city is transformative because the margins here are thin and the stakes here are personal. A few thousand votes determine who controls the budget you pay into. Whoever sits in those seats decides which fight to take up and which one to walk away from.

Every ballot cast in DC is a refusal to disappear. Every budget testimony delivered is a refusal to be treated as ornamental. Every door knocked, every petition signed, every candidate questioned, every meeting packed is a declaration that we are not a federal possession. We are a community. We are a people. We will participate in the shape of our own lives. The people who benefit from our exclusion are betting you will sit things out. **Prove them wrong.**

# **NO RESPONSES RECEIVED**

The following races did not receive any candidate responses and, as a result, were not included in this report.

## **Candidates for Council Chair**

Phil  
Mendelson (D)

Abi-Ananiah  
Prudent (R)

## **Candidate for Ward 3**

Matthew  
Frumin (D)

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# CANDIDATES FOR AT LARGE



# The Candidates for AT-LARGE

## CANDIDATES 1-5



**1** Dwight  
Davis (D)



**2** Candace Tiana  
Nelson (D)



**3** Leniqua'dominique  
Jenkins (D)



**4** Fred  
Hill (D)



**5** Oye  
Owolewa (D)

# The Candidates for AT-LARGE

## CANDIDATES 6-11



**6** Dyana N. M.  
**Forester (D)**



**7** Lisa  
**Raymond (D)**



**8** Kevin B.  
**Chavous (D)**



**9** Greg  
**Jackson (D)**



**10** Darryl  
**Moch (G)**



**11** Darrell  
**Green (R)**

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# CANDIDATES FOR AT LARGE

YES OR NO RESPONSES



# Y/N Questions (set 1 of 6) to Candidates for AT-LARGE

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

1. DWIGHT DAVIS (D)

2. CANDACE TIANA NELSON (D)

3. LENIQUA'DOMINIQUE JENKINS (D)

4. FRED HILL (D)

5. OYE OWOLEWA (D)

6. DYANA N. M. FORESTER (D)

7. LISA RAYMOND (D)

8. KEVIN B. CHAVOUS (D)

9. GREG JACKSON (D)

10. DARRYL MOCH (G)

11. DARRELL GREEN (R)

**1. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support legislation mandating that all DC agency budgets include detailed line-item breakdowns in publicly available, word format?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

**2. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support legislation requiring that agency-level budget submissions to the Mayor be made publicly available before the Mayor transmits the proposed budget to the Council?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
N	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	N	-	Y	Y

**3. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support holding an annual stand-alone hearing on revenue matters in the Committee of the Whole?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

**4. Accountability & Transparency: Oversight:** Do you support strengthening whistleblower protections for DC government employees who report any form of wrongdoing, including but not limited to waste, fraud, mismanagement, abuse of authority, violations of law or regulation, and threats to public health or safety?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 2 of 6) to Candidates for AT-LARGE

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

1. DWIGHT DAVIS (D)

2. CANDACE TIANA NELSON (D)

3. LENIQUA'DOMINIQUE JENKINS (D)

4. FRED HILL (D)

5. OYE OWOLEWA (D)

6. DYANA N. M. FORESTER (D)

7. LISA RAYMOND (D)

8. KEVIN B. CHAVOUS (D)

9. GREG JACKSON (D)

10. DARRYL MOCH (G)

11. DARRELL GREEN (R)

**5. Accountability & Transparency: Oversight:** Do you support requiring the public disclosure of all points of contact, including in-person meetings, phone calls, electronic communications, and virtual meetings, between Council offices and registered lobbyists related to pending budget or legislative matters?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	N	-	Y	Y

**6. Accountability & Transparency: Oversight:** Do you support an independent audit of all active tax incentive programs and public subsidies to evaluate whether they have delivered promised community benefits?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

**7. Home Rule & Federal Autonomy:** Do you support DC's right to spend all locally-raised revenue without Congressional approval?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

**8. Home Rule & Federal Autonomy:** Do you support establishing a standing Council task force that meets at least once a month to monitor and respond to federal actions affecting DC's autonomy?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 3 of 6) to Candidates for AT-LARGE

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

1. DWIGHT DAVIS (D)

2. CANDACE TIANA NELSON (D)

3. LENIQUA'DOMINIQUE JENKINS (D)

4. FRED HILL (D)

5. OYE OWOLEWA (D)

6. DYANA N. M. FORESTER (D)

7. LISA RAYMOND (D)

8. KEVIN B. CHAVOUS (D)

9. GREG JACKSON (D)

10. DARRYL MOCH (G)

11. DARRELL GREEN (R)

**9. Home Rule & Federal Autonomy:** Would you publicly oppose any federal effort to place DC under increased Congressional control, including attempts to change the elected status of the Attorney General or alter the structure of DC's police force?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	N

**10. Economic Justice & Tax Reform:** Do you support tax reforms that would require the wealthiest DC residents and businesses to increase their tax contributions, such as new taxes on capital gains and high incomes?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	N

**11. Economic Justice & Tax Reform:** Do you support creating a Land Value Tax to generate dedicated revenue for WMATA operations?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
N	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	N	-	Y	Y

**12. Economic Justice & Tax Reform:** Do you support requiring that publicly financed development deals include enforceable community benefit agreements with affordable housing, local hiring, and living wage provisions?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 4 of 6) to Candidates for AT-LARGE

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

1. DWIGHT DAVIS (D)

2. CANDACE TIANA NELSON (D)

3. LENIQUA'DOMINIQUE JENKINS (D)

4. FRED HILL (D)

5. OYE OWOLEWA (D)

6. DYANA N. M. FORESTER (D)

7. LISA RAYMOND (D)

8. KEVIN B. CHAVOUS (D)

9. GREG JACKSON (D)

10. DARRYL MOCH (G)

11. DARRELL GREEN (R)

**13. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Would you support emergency budget legislation to backfill critical social services in the event of federal funding cuts to DC programs?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	N

**14. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Do you support providing \$56 million in recurring funding for the DC Child Tax Credit to benefit the families of approximately 70,000 children?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

**15. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Would you support legislation to protect Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits from proposed cuts to cost-of-living adjustments, time limits, and sanctions?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

**16. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Do you support increasing funding by \$4.4 million over FY26 levels to the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants and the Department of Human Services to expand domestic violence survivor services, including targeted support for underserved communities, primary prevention programming, and flexible cash assistance for survivors?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 5 of 6) to Candidates for AT-LARGE

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

1. DWIGHT DAVIS (D)

2. CANDACE TIANA NELSON (D)

3. LENIQUA'DOMINIQUE JENKINS (D)

4. FRED HILL (D)

5. OYE OWOLEWA (D)

6. DYANA N. M. FORESTER (D)

7. LISA RAYMOND (D)

8. KEVIN B. CHAVOUS (D)

9. GREG JACKSON (D)

10. DARRYL MOCH (G)

11. DARRELL GREEN (R)

**17. Housing, Transportation, & Behavioral Health:** Would you support funding fare-free Metro buses for DC residents through a fare buy-down plan with WMATA?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
N	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	N

**18. Housing, Transportation, & Behavioral Health:** Do you support maintaining current funding levels for the School-Based Behavioral Health program in DC public and public charter schools?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

**19. Housing, Transportation, & Behavioral Health:** Do you support expanding the Nuisance Abatement Fund to enable the Department of Buildings to directly repair housing code violations?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
N	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

**20. Housing, Transportation & Behavioral Health:** Would you support legislation to create standardized criteria, definitions, and due process protections for any government actions related to encampments?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	N

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 6 of 6) to Candidates for AT-LARGE

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

1. DWIGHT DAVIS (D)

2. CANDACE TIANA NELSON (D)

3. LENIQUA'DOMINIQUE JENKINS (D)

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8. KEVIN B. CHAVOUS (D)

9. GREG JACKSON (D)

10. DARRYL MOCH (G)

11. DARRELL GREEN (R)

**21. Food Access & Equity:** Would you support legislation to establish a Food First Responders Platform enabling community organizations to respond during food emergencies?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

**22. Food Access & Equity:** Would you support including locally-sourced food procurement requirements in DC government food service contracts?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

**23. Food Access & Equity:** Do you support dedicated local funding for food access infrastructure in communities east of the Anacostia River?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

**24. Food Access & Equity:** Do you support requiring annual public reporting on food access metrics, including food retail density, SNAP utilization, and diet-related health outcomes, disaggregated by ward?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y	-	Y	-	Y	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

## Explanations to Y/N Questions

**Would you like to elaborate on your answers to any of the Yes/No questions presented?**

**Note:** Only candidates who provided additional explanations will appear below.



Dwight  
Davis (D)

1.

The District's descent into a fiscal shortfall for FY27 demands honest scrutiny of how we have spent public money and who has benefited. Too many native and long-time Washingtonians are being priced out of the city they built, while public subsidies have flowed to businesses and developments that have not delivered the jobs, affordable housing, or community investment that was promised.

Rather than imposing new taxes on residents, I want to focus the Council's attention on accountability for public funds used to finance private enterprise. The District's own data raises serious questions about whether these investments have generated the promised return. I support an Council audit of active tax incentive programs and public subsidies, because residents deserve to know what they are getting for their money. Despite all the development in the last few years, we still have underutilized space from vacancies in apartment building, office buildings, and along major business corridors.

Now is not the time to continue funding businesses that will close within a few years or relocate once the District becomes too expensive for a growing family. That is the very problem we are failing to solve. Fiscal responsibility and economic justice are not competing values. They require each other.

# Explanations to Y/N Questions

**Would you like to elaborate on your answers to any of the Yes/No questions presented?**

**Note:** Only candidates who provided additional explanations will appear below.



Oye  
Owolewa (D)

5.

As a pharmacist I learned that you cannot treat a patient one symptom at a time and expect them to get well. The same is true of the District. Housing, food access, healthcare, transit, and revenue are one system, and the budget is where we decide whether that system works for everyone or only for some.

In Congress Heights, where I live, the life expectancy is 72 years, twenty-two years less than in Georgetown Foxhall, eight miles away. That gap is not a mystery. It is a budget choice. It is what happens when DC spends decades handing tax abatements, TIF deals, and Opportunity Zone subsidies to developers while cutting ERAP from \$63 million to \$8.6 million, eliminating the Healthcare Alliance for 25,000 residents, and leaving the Pay Equity Fund on the chopping block. Public dollars are going somewhere. The question is whether they are going to the people who need them or the people who already have enough.

I support progressive revenue, including a millionaires tax on income above \$500,000, a capital gains tax increase, a Business Activity Tax on corporations using DC's economy without paying into it, and a Land Value Tax near Metro stations to fund WMATA, because we cannot fund the services this questionnaire describes without asking more from those who have benefited most from DC's growth.

I also support the budget process reforms here because transparency is not a procedural nicety. It is the foundation of accountability. When agency budgets are hidden, lobbyist contacts go undisclosed, and tax incentives are never independently audited, the people who lose are always the same people, the ones who cannot afford a lobbyist of their own.

# Explanations to Y/N Questions

**Would you like to elaborate on your answers to any of the Yes/No questions presented?**

**Note:** Only candidates who provided additional explanations will appear below.



Dyana N. M.  
**Forester (D)**

6.

As a proud DC native, working-class single mom, community organizer, labor leader, and DCPS parent, I've stood with the Fair Budget Coalition and seen firsthand how critical their work is. Our budget process too often shuts out the very residents most impacted—while the loudest and most resourced voices continue to shape outcomes, especially in DCPS.

I've relied on safety net services to support my family, so I know what's at stake. When budget cuts are proposed, they may look like numbers on a page—but for families like mine, they are real consequences. I will bring both data and lived experience to the table to ensure decisions reflect the realities of DC residents.



Darryl  
**Moch (D)**

10.

I have affirmed support for all the critical questions posed, which naturally raises the question: how do we fund these essential initiatives? The answer lies in an incremental, prioritized approach focused on improving quality of life, ensuring affordability, and preventing the displacement of low- and moderate-income DC residents who are increasingly unable to afford living in the city.

My advocacy through the DC Statehood Green Party and active membership in the Fair Budget Coalition (FBC), with direct leadership and representation by the late David Schwartzman, aligns me firmly with the coalition's major goals. This alignment is not just about supporting these common-sense and humane budget priorities but also about leading earnest efforts to realize them.

# Explanations to Y/N Questions

## Would you like to elaborate on your answers to any of the Yes/No questions presented?



Darryl  
Moch (D)

10.

One key example is school-based mental health services. I strongly believe we must not only maintain current funding levels but also expand and increase the availability and resources of these services. Addressing such foundational issues will create positive ripple effects across other areas of need.

To fund these priorities responsibly, I support adjusting tax obligations on the wealthiest residents and corporations. This approach can eliminate budget deficits that might otherwise hinder the implementation of vital programs and fiscal reforms, allowing us to invest in these reforms without cutting other essential services or budget necessities. Corporations, while thriving in DC, must recognize their inherent obligation to support the communities from which they profit.

Transparency, access, and equitable engagement are crucial to ensuring that the people who need these services most—often those who are ill-informed or underexposed to available resources—can benefit fully. We have significant work ahead to build trust and awareness, and to guarantee that resources reach all communities equitably.

Success depends on strong, collaborative partnerships. Legislators and the executive branch must work hand-in-hand with resident and citizen leaders, councils, community- and faith-based organizations, public-serving entities, and corporate leaders. These partnerships will provide the guidance, insight, and shared responsibility needed to develop a thriving, inclusive metropolis.

Together, we can ensure that DC remains a place where businesses want to be and can thrive, while also being a city that supports and uplifts all its residents, regardless of social standing or economic status.

FAIR BUDGET  
≥ COALITION

# CANDIDATES FOR AT LARGE

SHORT ANSWER RESPONSES





## Candace Tiana Nelson (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Government Transparency & Process: How would you use your platform to ensure residents from all wards, including those from historically underrepresented communities, have voice in the Council’s budget and legislative process?**

“Government transparency starts with access. Too many residents, especially in historically underrepresented communities, do not feel seen, heard, or valued in the Council’s budget and legislative process because participation is often structured around government’s convenience instead of the public’s reality.

As an At-Large Councilmember, I would bring hearings and roundtables directly into communities by hosting them in libraries, recreation centers, and schools across all eight wards, not just at the Wilson Building. I would also push for evening and weekend hearings because people working multiple jobs, raising families, or relying on public transit are not always available from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. If the word “hearing” is in “hearings,” then the public must truly have a chance to be heard.

I also support restoring standalone standing committees, including a dedicated Committee on Education, so issues receive focused oversight and stronger public engagement.

In addition, I would establish advisory groups and task forces tied to major legislation and budget priorities to ensure residents, workers, parents, youth, and community stakeholders are engaged before decisions are made, not after.

Transparency is not just publishing documents online. It is building a government culture where people can meaningfully participate in shaping the decisions that affect their lives.”



## Candace Tiana Nelson (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Government Transparency & Process: What specific oversight initiatives would you pursue to ensure DC agencies are accountable for spending allocations and program delivery?**

“Oversight should not be performative. It should measure whether agencies are actually delivering results for residents.

My approach is shaped by more than two decades in DC government, including developing agency performance plans, key performance indicators (KPIs), and contract oversight systems. As a Councilmember, I would push for stronger performance-informed oversight that connects budget allocations to measurable outcomes.

First, I would establish public-facing agency dashboards so residents can track service delivery timelines, spending progress, staffing vacancies, and agency performance in real time.

Second, I would strengthen oversight of agency performance plans by comparing stated goals against actual results. Agencies should be required to explain barriers to implementation and present corrective action plans when they fall short.

Third, I would increase oversight of major contracts and procurements to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent efficiently and agencies deliver promised services. My experience managing large government contracts taught me that accountability requires clear metrics, regular monitoring, and transparency.

Good oversight is about building a government that works better for the people it serves.”



## Candace Tiana Nelson (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: How would you approach building Council consensus around a response to federal threats to DC’s budget and self-governance?**

“Federal interference requires a coordinated, disciplined, and unified response from the DC Council. Protecting DC’s budget and self-governance must be treated as a defense of democracy itself.

As a Councilmember, I would work to build consensus by focusing on the shared principle that DC residents deserve the right to govern themselves and have locally approved budgets respected by Congress.

I also believe the Council should establish an Office of Federal Affairs dedicated to monitoring congressional activity, coordinating rapid response strategies, strengthening relationships with federal partners, and helping the Council proactively prepare for threats to Home Rule, local laws, and the District’s budget.

In addition, I would support stronger coordination between the Council, the Executive Branch, our congressional delegate, national advocacy organizations, and state and local allies across the country. Federal threats move quickly, and our response must be organized, informed, and strategic.

My approach would be collaborative, but clear-eyed. We cannot afford fragmentation or silence when Congress attempts to interfere with the will of DC residents. Whether the issue is our budget, criminal laws, immigration policies, or voter-approved initiatives, I will stand firmly for DC autonomy and democratic self-governance.”



## Candace Tiana Nelson (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: What legislative actions would you prioritize to address the impacts of federal policies on DC residents, including immigrants, federal workers, and unhoused residents?**

“I would prioritize legislative actions that strengthen protections, stabilize families, and preserve access to essential services for residents impacted by federal policies.

For immigrants, I would support legislation protecting and strengthening the District’s Sanctuary Values framework so residents can safely access schools, healthcare, housing, and public safety services without fear that local government will be used as an arm of federal immigration enforcement. I would also support expanded language access and increased funding for legal defense and community-based organizations serving immigrant families.

For federal workers and contractors impacted by layoffs or shutdowns, I would support emergency workforce stabilization measures, including expanded unemployment assistance, workforce retraining, and small business support.

For unhoused residents, I would prioritize legislation increasing investments in permanent supportive housing, housing vouchers, shelter access, and better coordination between the Department of Human Services and Department of Behavioral Health.

The District’s legislative response must protect the dignity, stability, and rights of DC residents.”



## Candace Tiana Nelson (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Taxes & Public Deals: What specific tax measures, if any, would you champion in your first term, and what is your approach to building the votes needed to pass them?**

“My approach to tax policy is guided by fairness, long-term fiscal stability, and protecting working families from carrying a disproportionate burden while ensuring the District can fund essential services.

I believe tax increases should be approached carefully, especially during periods of economic uncertainty. The District must remain competitive as we work to retain businesses, grow jobs, attract investment, and diversify our economy beyond federal employment. Before asking residents and businesses to pay more, we should strengthen government efficiency, improve oversight of spending, and focus on growing our tax base through housing production, workforce development, and economic growth.

That said, I am open to targeted revenue measures that ask the wealthiest residents and highly profitable corporations to contribute fairly, particularly when tied to clear investments in housing, education, healthcare, transportation, and public safety.

Building the votes to pass tax measures requires early coalition-building, honest communication, and data-driven policymaking. I would work collaboratively with Council colleagues, advocates, labor, businesses, and residents to identify shared priorities and clearly explain the tradeoffs involved in budget decisions.

Residents are more willing to support revenue measures when they trust government is spending taxpayer dollars effectively and transparently.”



## Candace Tiana Nelson (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Taxes & Public Deals: How would you approach the relationship between economic development incentives and equitable returns for DC's communities?**

“Economic development incentives should produce measurable public benefits. If the District is providing tax abatements, subsidies, public land, or other incentives, residents should see clear returns in the form of affordable housing, local hiring, workforce development, small business opportunities, and long-term community investment.

My approach is not anti-development. DC needs economic growth, housing production, and job creation. But incentives should be strategic, transparent, and tied to enforceable community outcomes.

As a Councilmember, I would push for stronger accountability measures tied to public deals, including clear performance benchmarks, public reporting requirements, clawback provisions when commitments are not met, and regular oversight of compliance.

I also believe communities should be engaged earlier in the process, particularly residents in neighborhoods most directly impacted by development. Too often decisions feel done to communities instead of developed with them.

Economic development works best when growth is shared. The goal should be to attract investment while ensuring longtime residents, workers, and small businesses can remain in and benefit from the communities helping create that growth.”



## Candace Tiana Nelson (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

**Community Safety: Describe your approach to community safety funding: what would you invest in, what would you consider reducing, and how would impacted communities inform those decisions?**

“My approach to community safety is rooted in prevention, accountability, and community partnership. True public safety requires both effective emergency response and investments that address the root causes of harm.

I would prioritize investments in violence interruption programs, mental health responders, youth employment and after-school opportunities, libraries and recreation centers, housing stabilization, and trauma-informed services for victims and families impacted by violence. I also support stronger coordination between agencies so residents are not forced to navigate disconnected systems during moments of crisis.

I believe all public safety investments, including policing, should be accompanied by strong oversight, transparency, and measurable outcomes. Programs that are not delivering results should be reevaluated so resources can be directed toward strategies proven to reduce harm and improve quality of life.

I also believe impacted communities must help shape these decisions. Residents closest to the challenges often understand the solutions best. That means bringing community voices into budget discussions, oversight hearings, advisory groups, and violence prevention planning before decisions are made, not after.

Public safety requires coordination, prevention, accountability, and investment in people and communities.”



## Candace Tiana Nelson (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Community Safety: How would you address the intersection of housing insecurity, behavioral health, and community safety in your legislative priorities?**

“My approach to community safety is rooted in prevention, accountability, and community partnership. True public safety requires both effective emergency response and investments that address the root causes of harm.

I would prioritize investments in violence interruption programs, mental health responders, youth employment and after-school opportunities, libraries and recreation centers, housing stabilization, and trauma-informed services for victims and families impacted by violence. I also support stronger coordination between agencies so residents are not forced to navigate disconnected systems during moments of crisis.

I believe all public safety investments, including policing, should be accompanied by strong oversight, transparency, and measurable outcomes. Programs that are not delivering results should be reevaluated so resources can be directed toward strategies proven to reduce harm and improve quality of life.

I also believe impacted communities must help shape these decisions. Residents closest to the challenges often understand the solutions best. That means bringing community voices into budget discussions, oversight hearings, advisory groups, and violence prevention planning before decisions are made, not after.

Public safety requires coordination, prevention, accountability, and investment in people and communities.”



## Candace Tiana Nelson (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Food Access: How would you use your position to address food access equity for residents in food-insecure wards while representing the entire District?**

“Food access is a basic quality of life issue, and no resident in the nation’s capital should struggle to access healthy, affordable food. While food insecurity disproportionately impacts some wards, addressing it must be a citywide priority because hunger affects health, education, economic stability, and community well-being across the District.

As a Councilmember, one of my priorities would be expanding universal free meals for students. Children cannot learn while hungry, and school meal programs are one of the most effective ways to reduce food insecurity, remove stigma, and support working families.

Beyond schools, I would support investments that increase access to full-service grocery stores, strengthen partnerships with local farmers and community-based food organizations, expand healthy food access programs, and improve transportation connections to food resources.

I also believe impacted communities must help shape these strategies. Residents understand the barriers they face, whether it is affordability, transportation, or availability.”

Food equity is about dignity, health, and ensuring every resident has a fair opportunity to thrive.”



## Candace Tiana Nelson (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Food Access: What legislative proposals, if any, would you advance to strengthen DC's local food system?**

"I would support legislation that helps attract and retain grocery stores in underserved communities while also creating opportunities for smaller neighborhood markets and cooperatives.

I also believe the District should continue investing in community gardens and farmers markets, particularly in neighborhoods with limited healthy food options. These spaces improve food access while strengthening community connections. In addition, I support strengthening school meal programs because they are one of the most direct and effective ways government can address food insecurity for children and working families.

Finally, I would prioritize stronger coordination between agencies involved in food policy, public health, economic development, and transportation so the District approaches food access as a connected systems issue rather than isolated programs."

**Optional: Please select the top three policy areas you believe are most critical for the DC Council to address in the next two years:** Government Transparency & Process, Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy, Taxes & Public Deals, Community Safety, Housing Insecurity & Behavioral Health, Food Access

Candidate's Selections:

**Government Transparency & Process**  
**Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy**  
**Housing Insecurity & Behavioral Health**



## Oye Owolewa (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Government Transparency & Process: How would you use your platform to ensure residents from all wards, including those from historically underrepresented communities, have voice in the Council's budget and legislative process?**

“I learned how budgets reach residents – or fail to – as an ANC Commissioner in Ward 8. Young men in my neighborhood near Congress Heights told me they could not get jobs because of their records and did not know how to navigate government systems. They were not disengaged. The system had never invited them in. Because of that conversation and many like it, I launched quarterly expungement clinics that have served 600 plus residents and ran small business contracting seminars in Ward 8. Residents already know what they need. The question is whether government structures itself to listen before the decision is made.

I will strengthen the REACH Act so racial equity impact assessments happen before budgets and deals are finalized, and tie agency leadership evaluations and funding to measurable equity outcomes. I will hold accessible budget hearings on weekends and evenings, in hybrid formats, and in partnership with ANCs in every ward, especially east of the Anacostia. I will require community benefit reporting and displacement safeguards on every Opportunity Zone and TIF deal, and back full implementation of Initiative 83 so voters have more voice in who represents them.”

#### **Government Transparency & Process: What specific oversight initiatives would you pursue to ensure DC agencies are accountable for spending allocations and program delivery?**

“As a frontline pharmacist during COVID, I administered some of DC's first vaccines and discovered that more than 40 percent of DC's supply was going to non-residents while my neighbors in Wards 7 and 8 could not get appointments. I went to the FEMA clinic at Greenbelt Metro, questioned why DC residents were excluded, and pushed until appointments opened to my community. Agencies do not audit themselves. Oversight has to be hands-on, public, and willing to name names.



## Oye Owolewa (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

I will require public dashboards for the agencies where the gap between dollars allocated and dollars reaching residents is widest: DCHA voucher lease-up timelines, ERAP spend-down rates, DHCD project pipelines, and DCRA permitting delays. I will fight to enforce the Schools First in Budgeting Act and protect At-Risk funds from being swept into central office costs, fully fund the Office of the DC Auditor to match the scope of the agencies it watches, and require mandatory public reporting on MPD-ICE coordination, FOIA response times, and contracted-out program performance. I will haul agency leadership into open hearings when programs miss benchmarks. Not reassignment. Real consequences.”

#### **Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: How would you approach building Council consensus around a response to federal threats to DC’s budget and self-governance?**

“I have spent six years as DC’s Shadow Representative, taking more than 250 meetings on Capitol Hill, traveling to Utah and West Virginia to organize, and helping introduce a DC statehood resolution in the West Virginia House of Delegates. You do not build consensus on federal threats by waiting for the next override. You build it before the threat lands, with members who know their constituents are watching.

I will bring that work to the Council. I will convene standing weekly coordination among Council members and senior staff so the District responds to federal moves, budget riders, ICE operations, executive orders, and contract approvals, in days not weeks, with one voice. I will partner with Free DC, ACLU DC, JUFJ, labor, and faith coalitions to give my colleagues political cover to take harder votes and to fill the room when Trump moves against us.

I will press for clear Council positions on the STOP ICE HQ expansion at St. Elizabeths, on full Sanctuary Values Act enforcement, and on protecting every voter-approved initiative. These are the fights where consensus already exists and the Council simply has to act. DC statehood is the foundation. Every local fight is downstream of it. We do not see our mayor protecting us against the White House. The Council can and must.”



## Oye Owolewa (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

**Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: What legislative actions would you prioritize to address the impacts of federal policies on DC residents, including immigrants, federal workers, and unhoused residents?**

“I am the son of Nigerian immigrants, a pharmacist who has filled prescriptions for federal workers and seniors across DC, and a Ward 8 resident who has watched neighbors slide toward homelessness when emergency rental assistance ran dry. Federal policy falls hardest on the people who can least absorb the cost. DC legislation has to catch them.

For immigrants: I will fight to fully enforce the Sanctuary Values Act, end every form of MPD-ICE cooperation, require mandatory public reporting on any contact between DC agencies and federal immigration enforcement, increase funding for immigration legal services and language access, and enforce the \$1,000 local child tax credit for ITIN filers.

For federal workers hit by mass layoffs and contract clawbacks: I will fight for emergency rental, mortgage, and healthcare bridge assistance, expand DC Healthcare Alliance and Medicaid pathways for those losing federal coverage, and prioritize DC hiring and contracting for displaced federal workers.

For unhoused residents: I will fight to fully restore emergency rental assistance, pair it with universal right to counsel in eviction cases, fully fund permanent supportive housing and the Local Rent Supplement Program, end encampment sweeps, and require public reporting on voucher lease-up timelines so a voucher in hand becomes a key in the door.”



## Oye Owolewa (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Taxes & Public Deals: What specific tax measures, if any, would you champion in your first term, and what is your approach to building the votes needed to pass them?**

“DC does not have a revenue problem. DC has a who-pays problem.

In my first term I will champion four specific measures. A millionaires tax raising income tax rates on earnings above \$500,000, with steeper rates above \$1 million. An increase in the capital gains rate of 1 point for AGI above \$500,000, scaling to 3 points above \$1 million. A Business Activity Tax of 1.5 to 2 percent on large professional services firms using the federal pass-through loophole to avoid DC taxes. And a Land Value Tax near Metro stations dedicated to WMATA operations. Together these raise hundreds of millions without touching working families.

Building the votes requires a governing coalition, not just a candidate position. I have already built one. More than 22 endorsing organizations span labor, immigrant rights, healthcare, community safety, and neighborhood associations across all eight wards. These are the same organizations that fill Council hearing rooms, generate constituent pressure, and give members political cover to take harder votes. They are not just campaign supporters. They are the coalition I will organize alongside to move this legislation.

I will pair that community power with direct Council member relationships, public data from DC Fiscal Policy Institute and JUFJ, and a transparent vote count so residents know exactly where every member stands before the budget markup.”



## Oye Owolewa (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Taxes & Public Deals: How would you approach the relationship between economic development incentives and equitable returns for DC's communities?**

“I am the son of Nigerian immigrants, a pharmacist who has filled prescriptions for federal workers and seniors across DC, and a Ward 8 resident who has watched neighbors slide toward homelessness when emergency rental assistance ran dry. Federal policy falls hardest on the people who can least absorb the cost. DC legislation has to catch them.

For immigrants: I will fight to fully enforce the Sanctuary Values Act, end every form of MPD-ICE cooperation, require mandatory public reporting on any contact between DC agencies and federal immigration enforcement, increase funding for immigration legal services and language access, and enforce the \$1,000 local child tax credit for ITIN filers.

For federal workers hit by mass layoffs and contract clawbacks: I will fight for emergency rental, mortgage, and healthcare bridge assistance, expand DC Healthcare Alliance and Medicaid pathways for those losing federal coverage, and prioritize DC hiring and contracting for displaced federal workers.

For unhoused residents: I will fight to fully restore emergency rental assistance, pair it with universal right to counsel in eviction cases, fully fund permanent supportive housing and the Local Rent Supplement Program, end encampment sweeps, and require public reporting on voucher lease-up timelines so a voucher in hand becomes a key in the door.”



## Oye Owolewa (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

**Community Safety: Describe your approach to community safety funding: what would you invest in, what would you consider reducing, and how would impacted communities inform those decisions?**

“The safest communities are the ones with the most resources, not the most police.

I will invest in violence interruption programs, expanded Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment, mental health crisis response that is not MPD, school counselors and nurses in place of school police, expungement and reentry support, tuition-free UDC, and trauma services in the communities most harmed by violence. One additional year of schooling reduces violent crime by 11 to 12 percent. That is where the dollars belong.

I oppose the FY2027 proposal to spend \$75 million on a new DC Jail and increase youth detention spending by \$6.6 million while cutting parks and recreation by \$5.8 million. Continued investment in incarceration while youth programs disappear is not public safety. It is a choice to fail our communities. Reinvest in communities, not cages.

Impacted communities must lead these decisions through paid roles for violence interrupters and returning citizens on safety planning, community-driven budget benchmarks, and listening sessions where violence is most concentrated.”

**Community Safety: How would you address the intersection of housing insecurity, behavioral health, and community safety in your legislative priorities?**

“As a pharmacist I know it takes a whole system to keep people healthy and safe. Doctors, nurses, mental health practitioners, pharmacists, EMTs, firefighters, nonprofit leaders, and government agencies working together. Safety is not a police function. It is a public health function. Narrow thinking that treats every crisis as a law enforcement problem is not safety. It is control.



## Oye Owolewa (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

I will fight to fully fund permanent supportive housing and the Local Rent Supplement Program, restore emergency rental assistance and pair it with universal right to counsel in eviction, and end encampment sweeps that cycle people through trauma without housing them.

I will fight to build out a non-MPD mental health crisis response with paramedics, peer specialists, and clinicians available around the clock. I will restore DC Medicaid and the Healthcare Alliance for the 25,000 residents cut off from coverage, raise reimbursement rates so behavioral health providers can actually take Medicaid patients, and treat overdose as a public health emergency with harm reduction, stable housing, and continuity of care.

A person who is housed, connected to care, and supported by their community does not become a public safety crisis. That is the investment DC has failed to make. That is what I will fight to change.”

#### **Food Access: How would you use your position to address food access equity for residents in food-insecure wards while representing the entire District?**

“I do not need a report to understand food deserts in Ward 8. I live in Congress Heights. I drive down Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, Alabama Avenue, and Good Hope Road. I see carry-out windows and dollar stores where grocery stores should be. This is not my policy priority. It is my neighborhood.

Access alone is not enough. COVID exposed what Ward 8 residents already knew: DC’s food system is fragile, over-reliant on big box stores, and disconnected from the communities it is supposed to serve. When supply chains broke, the people with the fewest options suffered most.

Food security requires three things: access, quality, and education. I will bring full-service grocery stores and community-owned food co-ops to SE through targeted public investment with binding community benefit agreements, local hire, and clawback provisions. I will resource the local markets, urban farms, and nonprofits already doing this work.



## Oye Owolewa (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

I will fully fund nutrition education integrated into healthcare, schools, and home visiting programs. A grocery store on the corner means nothing if residents have never learned how food connects to chronic disease. As a pharmacist I have seen this firsthand.

I will reexamine school meal and senior contracts to ensure DC residents are fed nutritious food, not processed filler.

A pharmacy in every neighborhood, a grocery store in every neighborhood. The health of the District depends on both.”

#### **Food Access: What legislative proposals, if any, would you advance to strengthen DC’s local food system?**

“I will advance a DC Food System Act that treats food as infrastructure, not charity, tying together the levers DC currently handles as disconnected programs.

Full funding for the DC Food Policy Council with real coordinating authority across agencies. An expanded Urban Agriculture Tax Credit reaching small growers in every ward. Dedicated public land through DGS for urban farms and food hubs so land stays in food production and out of speculative development. A permanent SNAP Match at every DC farmers market.

I will require DC government, schools, hospitals, jails, and senior care facilities to source a rising percentage of food from DC and regional producers each year, with public reporting and penalties for non-compliance. Public dollars buying public food from local hands.



## Oye Owolewa (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

I will fund a DC Food Hub for aggregation, cold storage, and processing so small growers and home-based entrepreneurs can scale. I will update the Home Food Establishment law so home-based producers, disproportionately immigrant women, can sell legally and grow.

I will protect community gardens through long-term DGS leases and fully fund Joyful Food Markets and farmers market produce match programs that are working and chronically underfunded.

Food is medicine. DC's budget should treat it that way.”

**Optional: Please select the top three policy areas you believe are most critical for the DC Council to address in the next two years:** Government Transparency & Process, Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy, Taxes & Public Deals, Community Safety, Housing Insecurity & Behavioral Health, Food Access

Candidate's Selections:

**Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy**  
**Community Safety**  
**Housing Insecurity & Behavioral Health**



## Dyana N. M. Forester (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Government Transparency & Process: How would you use your platform to ensure residents from all wards, including those from historically underrepresented communities, have voice in the Council's budget and legislative process?**

“Real participation isn’t just testimony at a hearing, it’s co-authorship of the budget itself. I will champion a formal participatory budgeting process for DC, giving residents, especially those in Wards 7 and 8, direct input over a meaningful share of discretionary spending. Drawing on Seattle’s Race and Social Justice Initiative model and the equity lens framework developed by Associated Black Charities, every budget proposal I support will be evaluated against clear questions: Does this increase access and opportunity for under-resourced communities? Does it reduce disparate outcomes? Who was at the table when it was designed? I’ll host quarterly ward-level budget briefings, not in Government Center, but in community centers, churches, and libraries in neighborhoods that have historically been afterthoughts. I’ll publish plain-language budget summaries translated into Spanish and Amharic. And I’ll work to institutionalize equity impact assessments as a required step before the Council votes on any major allocation, so that “merit” and “fairness” are defined by measurable outcomes for the communities that need it most.”

#### **Government Transparency & Process: What specific oversight initiatives would you pursue to ensure DC agencies are accountable for spending allocations and program delivery?**

“Accountability without measurement is theater. I will push for a DC Agency Equity Scorecard, an annual public report that tracks each agency’s spending outcomes against community needs by ward, not just by budget line items. Modeled on Madison, Wisconsin’s Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative, the scorecard will ask of every major program: Are communities receiving services in proportion to their needs? Are vendors and contractors reflecting the demographic makeup of DC? I will advocate for mandatory community benefit agreements on all contracts exceeding a threshold, and strengthen project labor agreements (PLAs) for publicly funded construction, ensuring local-hire provisions, apprenticeship pipelines, and



## Dyana N. M. Forester (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

prevailing wages that keep dollars circulating in the neighborhoods that built the workforce. I'll also use Council oversight hearings strategically, not as political theater, but as structured performance reviews with public dashboards showing agency progress on equity benchmarks. Residents should be able to look up whether DHCD, DOES, or DHS met their commitments in their ward last year. Sunlight is the prerequisite for trust."

#### **Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: How would you approach building Council consensus around a response to federal threats to DC's budget and self-governance?**

"DC's at-large seat is uniquely positioned to build a coalition across all eight wards precisely because it carries no parochial ward allegiance, and I intend to use that positioning deliberately. My first move will be to convene the full Council around a unified DC Self-Governance Compact: a statement of shared principles that transcends individual legislative priorities and makes clear that federal interference in DC's budget and laws is not a partisan issue but a democratic one. I'll work with the Mayor's office to ensure contingency budget planning is in place so that federal funding disruptions don't immediately translate to service cuts for the most vulnerable residents. I'll build coalitions with other city governments, particularly those in states with Democratic governors and attorneys general, to mount coordinated legal and legislative responses to federal overreach. And I'll amplify the voices of DC residents in national forums, because the most powerful tool against the argument that DC shouldn't govern itself is showing the country exactly who DC's residents are and what they've built. Statehood remains the long-term answer. Principled, coordinated resistance is the present-day one."

#### **Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: What legislative actions would you prioritize to address the impacts of federal policies on DC residents, including immigrants, federal workers, and unhoused residents?**

"Federal policy is landing on DC residents with disproportionate force, and those bearing the heaviest burden are immigrants, federal workers facing layoffs, and residents already without



## Dyana N. M. Forester (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

stable housing. My legislative priorities will be direct and grounded in need. For immigrants: I will strengthen DC's sanctuary protections, fund legal defense resources, and ensure that immigrant-serving municipal services, from school enrollment to health care, are fully accessible regardless of documentation status. Language access and cultural competency in service delivery are not optional extras; they are equity requirements. For federal workers facing displacement: I'll work with DC's workforce agencies to stand up rapid-response reemployment services, including skills translation programs and partnerships with local employers seeking to hire people with federal-sector backgrounds. For unhoused residents: I'll push to close the gap between federal shelter funding cuts and DC's Continuum of Care, ensuring DC does not balance its budget on the backs of people without housing. When we design policy that catches those falling hardest, we build a safety net strong enough to hold everyone."

### **Taxes & Public Deals: What specific tax measures, if any, would you champion in your first term, and what is your approach to building the votes needed to pass them?**

"Tax policy is economic policy, and DC's tax structure should reflect our values of fairness and investment in shared prosperity. In my first term, I will champion three measures: (1) A targeted increase in the commercial real estate transfer tax on high-value speculative transactions, with revenue dedicated to affordable housing production; (2) A review and reform of tax increment financing (TIF) districts to require binding community benefit commitments before approval, not just developer promises; and (3) Expansion of DC's Earned Income Tax Credit to reach more working residents with low incomes, particularly those who are self-employed or doing gig work. Building votes means doing the unglamorous work before the vote: hosting stakeholder briefings, bringing council colleagues to communities that will be affected, and building a public record of need and evidence that makes a "no" vote hard to justify. I've spent my career in environments where coalition-building was the job, and I know that durable majorities are built on relationships. I'll bring the data, bring the community voices, and bring a clear theory of how each proposal helps DC's overall economic health, not just targeted populations."



## Dyana N. M. Forester (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Taxes & Public Deals: How would you approach the relationship between economic development incentives and equitable returns for DC's communities?**

“The question is not whether DC uses development incentives, it’s whether residents see returns proportionate to the public investment made on their behalf. Right now, too many tax abatements, TIF arrangements, and density bonuses deliver significant private gain with diffuse or deferred community benefit. That has to change. My framework draws on the inclusive development model pioneered by the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative in Boston, where community land trusts, resident governance, and anti-displacement commitments were built into the development structure from the start, not added as afterthoughts. For DC, this means: mandatory community benefit agreements (CBAs) with enforcement mechanisms, not aspirational language, for any development receiving public subsidy above a defined threshold. CBAs should include local-hire and living-wage commitments backed by project labor agreements, affordable unit set-asides that are permanent rather than time-limited, and meaningful revenue sharing tied to project profitability. I’ll also advocate for a Community Return Index, a public scorecard measuring whether incentivized development is actually increasing tax base, jobs, and services in the ward where it lands. Investment without accountability is a subsidy. Investment with accountability is a partnership.”

#### **Community Safety: Describe your approach to community safety funding: what would you invest in, what would you consider reducing, and how would impacted communities inform those decisions?**

“Safety is a product of stability, stable housing, stable income, stable health, and stable community relationships. My funding framework starts from that premise. I would invest in: violence interruption programs with proven track records (like Cure the Streets) and ensure their funding is stable and multi-year, not subject to annual political cycles. Expansion of NEAR Act implementation, including street outreach workers and trauma-informed response teams. Mental and behavioral health co-responder units so that not every 911 call requires an armed officer. After-school, workforce, and mentorship programming in Wards 7 and 8 ,



## Dyana N. M. Forester (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

prevention infrastructure, not reaction infrastructure. I would scrutinize: surveillance technology procurement with no clear evidence base, and overtime spending patterns that indicate reactive policing without measurable public safety returns. Reducing spending in these areas is not about abandoning accountability; it's about applying the same standards of evidence and outcome measurement we should be applying to every program. How communities inform these decisions: through ward-level public safety advisory panels with genuine decision-making authority, not just consultation, over a portion of safety-related discretionary funds. Impacted communities know what safety looks like. We should be co-designing the systems, not just commenting on them.”

#### **Community Safety: How would you address the intersection of housing insecurity, behavioral health, and community safety in your legislative priorities?**

“These three issues are not separate policy lanes; they are a single, compounding cycle. A person in a housing crisis is more likely to experience behavioral health deterioration. A person in an untreated behavioral health crisis is more likely to become involved in the criminal justice system. A person cycling through that system is less likely to secure stable housing. We can break this cycle, but only if we fund and legislate as if they're connected. My legislative priorities: First, expand and protect DC's Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program with multi-year funding commitments, so providers can hire stable staff and build real relationships with residents. Second, pass legislation creating a behavioral health crisis continuum, ensuring that every ward has accessible walk-in behavioral health urgent care, crisis stabilization units, and mobile response teams as alternatives to emergency rooms and jails. Third, work to eliminate the criminal record barriers that block people from accessing public housing and supportive services, a policy explicitly identified in the Black Women Best framework as a structural exclusion that harms entire families. Finally, I'll advocate for Housing First to be the governing principle of DC's homelessness response, because the research is unambiguous: people cannot address health or safety challenges while in survival mode.”



## Dyana N. M. Forester (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Food Access: How would you use your position to address food access equity for residents in food-insecure wards while representing the entire District?**

“The at-large seat is one of the most powerful tools in DC for addressing food access inequity, precisely because it doesn’t belong to any one ward; it belongs to all of them. That means I can champion solutions that benefit Wards 7 and 8 without it being characterized as parochialism, because my mandate is explicitly citywide equity. My approach begins with honest geography: DC’s food deserts are not evenly distributed. They are concentrated in specific census tracts in the District’s eastern and southeastern wards, and they correlate directly with the District’s legacy of disinvestment, redlining, and inequitable infrastructure spending. Any serious food access strategy has to name that honestly and design solutions accordingly, not from a race-based framing that is legally vulnerable, but from a need-based, geographic-equity framework that produces the same outcomes. I will use my Council platform to convene a DC Food Access Equity Task Force that brings together residents, small food retailers, community health workers, and anchor institutions. I’ll push to ensure that any major development proposal in food-insecure wards includes a food retail component that is evaluated for affordability and access, just as we evaluate parking and green space. Food access is infrastructure. It belongs in every development conversation.”

#### **Food Access: What legislative proposals, if any, would you advance to strengthen DC’s local food system?**

“Strengthening DC’s local food system requires coordinated investments that support local producers, expand access, and build long-term resilience. I would advance legislation that treats food as both essential infrastructure and an economic opportunity.

First, I would expand support for urban agriculture and local producers by increasing funding for grants, land access, and technical assistance, particularly in food-insecure wards. This includes protecting and activating public land for food production and supporting community-led growing initiatives.



## Dyana N. M. Forester (D) Candidate for AT LARGE

### Short Answer Responses

Second, I would strengthen DC's food distribution infrastructure by investing in food hubs, commercial kitchens, and cooperative models that help small businesses and local farmers get products to market. This creates jobs while improving neighborhood access to fresh, affordable food.

Third, I would build on successful programs like Produce Plus and the Healthy Food Financing Initiative to incentivize grocery stores, co-ops, and mobile markets in underserved areas, while ensuring affordability for residents.

Finally, I would prioritize workforce development tied to the food economy—creating pathways in urban farming, food service, and distribution—aligned with my commitment to sustainable economic development. My approach centers equity, local ownership, and community voice to build a stronger, more resilient food system for every ward.”

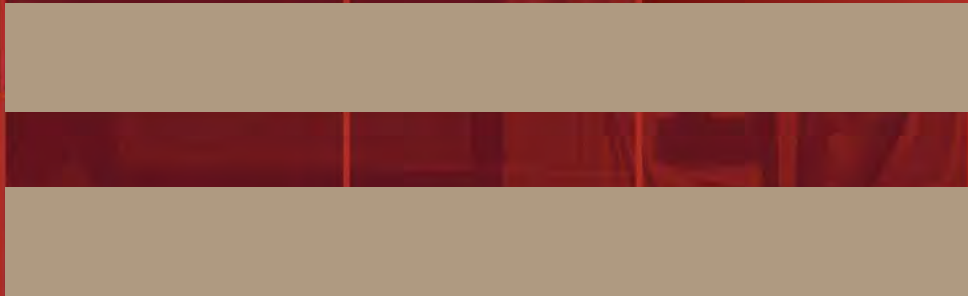
**Optional: Please select the top three policy areas you believe are most critical for the DC Council to address in the next two years:** Government Transparency & Process, Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy, Taxes & Public Deals, Community Safety, Housing Insecurity & Behavioral Health, Food Access

Candidate's Selections:

**Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy**  
**Community Safety**  
**Housing Insecurity & Behavioral Health**

FAIR BUDGET  
≥ COALITION

# CANDIDATES FOR AT LARGE SPECIAL ELECTION



# The Candidates for AT-LARGE SPECIAL ELECTION

## CANDIDATES 12-14



**12** Jacquie D.  
**Patterson (I)**



**13** Elissa  
**Silverman (I)**



**14** Doni  
**Crawford (I)**

**FAIR BUDGET**  
≥ COALITION

# CANDIDATES FOR AT LARGE SPECIAL ELECTION

**YES OR NO RESPONSES**



# Y/N Questions (set 1 of 6) to Candidates for AT-LARGE SPECIAL ELECTION

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

12. ELISSA SILVERMAN (I)

13. JACQUE D. PATTERSON (I)

14. DONI CRAWFORD (I)

**1. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support legislation mandating that all DC agency budgets include detailed line-item breakdowns in publicly available, word format?

12	13	14
Y	Y	N

**2. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support legislation requiring that agency-level budget submissions to the Mayor be made publicly available before the Mayor transmits the proposed budget to the Council?

12	13	14
Y	N	N

**3. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support holding an annual stand-alone hearing on revenue matters in the Committee of the Whole?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

**4. Accountability & Transparency: Oversight:** Do you support strengthening whistleblower protections for DC government employees who report any form of wrongdoing, including but not limited to waste, fraud, mismanagement, abuse of authority, violations of law or regulation, and threats to public health or safety?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 2 of 6) to Candidates for AT-LARGE SPECIAL ELECTION

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

12. ELISSA SILVERMAN (I)

13. JACQUE D. PATTERSON (I)

14. DONI CRAWFORD (I)

**5. Accountability & Transparency: Oversight:** Do you support requiring the public disclosure of all points of contact, including in-person meetings, phone calls, electronic communications, and virtual meetings, between Council offices and registered lobbyists related to pending budget or legislative matters?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

**6. Accountability & Transparency: Oversight:** Do you support an independent audit of all active tax incentive programs and public subsidies to evaluate whether they have delivered promised community benefits?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

**7. Home Rule & Federal Autonomy:** Do you support DC's right to spend all locally-raised revenue without Congressional approval?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

**8. Home Rule & Federal Autonomy:** Do you support establishing a standing Council task force that meets at least once a month to monitor and respond to federal actions affecting DC's autonomy?

12	13	14
Y	Y	N

## RESPONSE KEY:

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# Y/N Questions (set 3 of 6) to Candidates for AT-LARGE SPECIAL ELECTION

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

12. ELISSA SILVERMAN (I)

13. JACQUE D. PATTERSON (I)

14. DONI CRAWFORD (I)

**9. Home Rule & Federal Autonomy:** Would you publicly oppose any federal effort to place DC under increased Congressional control, including attempts to change the elected status of the Attorney General or alter the structure of DC's police force?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

**10. Economic Justice & Tax Reform:** Do you support tax reforms that would require the wealthiest DC residents and businesses to increase their tax contributions, such as new taxes on capital gains and high incomes?

12	13	14
Y	Y	N

**11. Economic Justice & Tax Reform:** Do you support creating a Land Value Tax to generate dedicated revenue for WMATA operations?

12	13	14
N	Y	Y

**12. Economic Justice & Tax Reform:** Do you support requiring that publicly financed development deals include enforceable community benefit agreements with affordable housing, local hiring, and living wage provisions?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

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# Y/N Questions (set 4 of 6) to Candidates for AT-LARGE SPECIAL ELECTION

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

12. ELISSA SILVERMAN (I)

13. JACQUE D. PATTERSON (I)

14. DONI CRAWFORD (I)

**13. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Would you support emergency budget legislation to backfill critical social services in the event of federal funding cuts to DC programs?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

**14. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Do you support providing \$56 million in recurring funding for the DC Child Tax Credit to benefit the families of approximately 70,000 children?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

**15. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Would you support legislation to protect Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits from proposed cuts to cost-of-living adjustments, time limits, and sanctions?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

**16. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Do you support increasing funding by \$4.4 million over FY26 levels to the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants and the Department of Human Services to expand domestic violence survivor services, including targeted support for underserved communities, primary prevention programming, and flexible cash assistance for survivors?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

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# Y/N Questions (set 5 of 6) to Candidates for AT-LARGE SPECIAL ELECTION

**CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:**

12. ELISSA SILVERMAN (I)

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**17. Housing, Transportation, & Behavioral Health:** Would you support funding fare-free Metro buses for DC residents through a fare buy-down plan with WMATA?

12	13	14
N	N	N

**18. Housing, Transportation, & Behavioral Health:** Do you support maintaining current funding levels for the School-Based Behavioral Health program in DC public and public charter schools?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

**19. Housing, Transportation, & Behavioral Health:** Do you support expanding the Nuisance Abatement Fund to enable the Department of Buildings to directly repair housing code violations?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

**20. Housing, Transportation & Behavioral Health:** Would you support legislation to create standardized criteria, definitions, and due process protections for any government actions related to encampments?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

**RESPONSE KEY:**

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# Y/N Questions (set 6 of 6) to Candidates for AT-LARGE SPECIAL ELECTION

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

12. ELISSA SILVERMAN (I)

13. JACQUE D. PATTERSON (I)

14. DONI CRAWFORD (I)

**21. Food Access & Equity:** Would you support legislation to establish a Food First Responders Platform enabling community organizations to respond during food emergencies?

12	13	14
Y	Y	N

**22. Food Access & Equity:** Would you support including locally-sourced food procurement requirements in DC government food service contracts?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

**23. Food Access & Equity:** Do you support dedicated local funding for food access infrastructure in communities east of the Anacostia River?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

**24. Food Access & Equity:** Do you support requiring annual public reporting on food access metrics, including food retail density, SNAP utilization, and diet-related health outcomes, disaggregated by ward?

12	13	14
Y	Y	Y

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# Explanations to Y/N Questions

**Would you like to elaborate on your answers to any of the Yes/No questions presented?**

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Doni  
**Crawford (I)**

**14.**

The law requires the Mayor to submit all budget enhancement requests to the Council and I believe that this part of the law should be followed. I don't believe we need additional legislation. I also don't believe we need to legislatively mandate that budget documents be released in a Word format. Typically, agency staff will provide word documents if requested and needed.

Instead of a Council task force on federal relations, I believe we should establish a dedicated federal relations office at the Council level so that the Council's voice on the Hill is consistent and strategic, not left to a single lobbyist. This office must have dedicated staff in order to be effective.

I support efforts to make sure residents pay their fair share, but I am interested in looking at current spending (including many instances of overspending), increasing efficiencies, and reducing wasteful spending. I am interested in learning more about additional ways to generate revenue in future years such as through the Business Activity Tax and the Land Value Tax. The Business Activity Tax will take a couple years to implement and in that time, we can consider ways to offset this new tax as the Tax Revision Commission initially proposed.

Given our current fiscal climate, I believe metrobus fare relief needs to be targeted to those who need it the most.

I can't commit to supporting legislation to establish a Food First Responders Platform without learning more about what it is.

# CANDIDATES FOR WARD 1



# The Candidates for WARD 1

## CANDIDATES 15-18



**15** Aparna  
Raj (D)



**16** Rashida  
Brown (D)



**17** Jackie  
Reyes Yanes (D)



**18** Terry  
Lynch (D)

# The Candidates for WARD 1

## CANDIDATES 19-21



**19** Miguel  
Trindade Deramo  
(D)



**20** Jude  
Crannitch (G)



**21** Jett James  
Jasper (R)



# CANDIDATES FOR WARD 1

## YES OR NO RESPONSES



# Y/N Questions (set 1 of 6) to Candidates for WARD 1

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15. APARNA RAJ (D)  
 16. RASHIDA BROWN (D)  
 17. JACKIE REYES YANES (D)  
 18. TERRY LYNCH (D)

19. MIGUEL TRINDADE DERAMO (D)  
 20. JUDE CRANNITCH (G)  
 21. JETT JAMES JASPER (R)

**1. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support legislation mandating that all DC agency budgets include detailed line-item breakdowns in publicly available, word format?

15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-

**2. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support legislation requiring that agency-level budget submissions to the Mayor be made publicly available before the Mayor transmits the proposed budget to the Council?

15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-

**3. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support holding an annual stand-alone hearing on revenue matters in the Committee of the Whole?

15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-

**4. Accountability & Transparency: Oversight:** Do you support strengthening whistleblower protections for DC government employees who report any form of wrongdoing, including but not limited to waste, fraud, mismanagement, abuse of authority, violations of law or regulation, and threats to public health or safety?

15	16	17	18	19	20	21
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-

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Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-

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# Y/N Questions (set 6 of 6) to Candidates for WARD 1

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Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-

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Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-

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Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	-

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# Explanations to Y/N Questions

**Would you like to elaborate on your answers to any of the Yes/No questions presented?**

**Note:** Only candidates who provided additional explanations will appear below.



Aparna  
Raj (D)

15.

As renter, union member, daughter of immigrants, and queer woman of color, I am running to represent Ward 1 on DC Council to make DC a place where everyone can afford to raise a family and live freely without fear. DC residents deserve a government that is transparent, accountable and works for every single person who lives here. As Councilmember, I will be an organizer in office, working to bring tenants, workers, and community members into the decision-making process and build lasting working class power. My top three priorities will be:

1. Stopping rent hikes: I will fight to enact housing policy that puts working families first rather than squeezing them for profit. That means expanding rent stabilization laws to support community stability, protecting key tenant protections like the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA), and building more housing for all residents – and especially for low- and moderate-income households.

The majority of Ward 1 residents are renters, and whether these are households that have recently arrived or those who have called Ward 1 home for years, everyone deserves the security of knowing they will not be priced out of their communities. They deserve to afford raising children here, to age in place, and to remain in the neighborhoods they have helped build. Ensuring safety and housing stability is essential to ensuring our diverse communities in Ward 1 can remain and thrive.

As a tenant organizer who has worked alongside working class renters to improve their housing conditions, stop rent increases, and purchase their buildings, I know that creating and preserving affordable housing will require a multifaceted approach.

# Explanations to Y/N Questions

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Aparna  
Raj (D)

15.

That is why I will fight to make it easier to build more housing in more places, end exclusionary zoning, and fight for a Comprehensive Plan that allows us to meet our housing needs. And I will do this while working to maintain strong investments in the Housing Production Trust Fund, conduct rigorous oversight to ensure that our District agencies like the Department of Housing and Community Development and DC Housing Authority are deploying their resources effectively, and develop new tools like an Office of Social Housing to expand permanently affordable housing options.

2. Free childcare for all. Everyone in DC should be able to raise a family in the city we love. Yet today, the typical DC family pays more than \$22,000 per child each year for childcare. That is unacceptable. That's why I am fighting for free childcare for all children from three months to three years old.

Free childcare will ensure families can meet their basic needs while giving every child access to high-quality early education. Too many parents – particularly those working low-wage jobs – struggle to juggle rent, groceries, transportation, and other essentials, even with programs such as the Childcare Subsidy Program. Free childcare for all will directly benefit families in Ward 1 who are working hard to stay afloat while building stable futures for their children, as well as raising pay for childcare workers, who are mostly women of color.

I recognize that fully funding this program will require raising revenue in a difficult financial climate, but investing in children and young families must be a priority. That is why I will fight to raise revenue by passing a business activity tax, closing corporate tax loopholes and ensuring large corporations pay their fair share, and

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Aparna  
Raj (D)

15.

direct new revenue toward free, universal childcare so DC remains a place where families can grow and thrive. And in the meantime, I will fight for permanent funding for the Pay Equity Fund and oppose any reductions to our childcare programs, like the ones the Mayor is currently proposing.

3. Standing up for DC. There are only two choices when faced with rising authoritarianism: collaboration or resistance. For Ward 1 – home to large Latino and immigrant communities – the District government must choose resistance and stand firmly with our neighbors.

Since the federal occupation began in August 2025, Latino and immigrant communities have faced constant attacks. Neighbors have been detained, and families separated. In my own neighborhood, I have joined organizers supporting residents trying to get to work, get groceries, and get their children to school safely. As Ward 1 Councilmember, protecting our immigrant neighbors from federal overreach will be a top priority.

I will enforce and strengthen our sanctuary laws, including banning ongoing forms of collaboration between District agencies and ICE and ensuring there are real consequences when officials violate the law. I will conduct aggressive oversight of agencies such as the Metropolitan Police Department and Metro Transit Police to ensure compliance with our sanctuary laws. I will fight to fund public immigration defenders, ban law enforcement officers from wearing masks that allow them to evade accountability, and advocate for protecting and expanding District autonomy by advocating for Statehood.

# Explanations to Y/N Questions

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Aparna  
Raj (D)

15.

As an organizer, I understand the importance of coordination and infrastructure, which is why I will use my office to help centralize resources and strengthen communication across Ward 1 so community safety efforts are effective and responsive.

The people of DC deserve a government that works for them, and a government that does not balance its budget on the backs of working people. That's why I have joined previous years' actions at the Wilson Building to push for a budget that funds resources like emergency rental assistance and housing vouchers. That's also why I developed a video outlining issues with Mayor Bowser's FY 2027 budget and plan to join budget hearings to call for taxes on the ultrawealthy and corporations to maintain funding for vital services. We deserve a transparent budget process, which is why I will invest in a communications structure that is easy to follow, as I have for the duration of my campaign. We can win statehood, which is why I will leverage the relationships I have developed with national organizations to make statehood a fight in every jurisdiction across the country. We can ensure that our infrastructure, our social safety net, our government services, actually meet the needs of everyday Washingtonians. We can have it all if we fight for it, and as Ward 1 Councilmember, I will organize to win that fight and ensure that DC is a welcoming place for all people to call home.

# Explanations to Y/N Questions

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Rashida  
**Brown (D)**

16.

As a social worker and public policy leader who has spent decades working in health and human services systems, I've seen this pattern countless times: people making impossible choices for their families because of underfunded programs like healthcare, paid family leave, early childhood programs, rental subsidies...you name it, and I've seen the daily struggle firsthand in my work. But I also lived paycheck to paycheck myself when I first moved to DC as a social work student working minimum wage, sleeping on the floor of my apartment and eating noodles out of a cup. We are an incredibly wealthy city, but too many of our residents do not benefit from that wealth. As Councilmember I'll fight to redistribute that wealth to those in need, by taxing our wealthiest residents, restructuring our tax system so that more businesses pay into it, and ensuring more residents receive tax benefits like the child tax credit, universal basic income and earned income tax credit. I'll work with colleagues to set dedicated revenue streams for priority programs like the ECE Pay Equity Fund, and I'll constantly think creatively and boldly about protecting our social safety net and growing wealth for our working families.

# Explanations to Y/N Questions

## Would you like to elaborate on your answers to any of the Yes/No questions presented?

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Jackie  
Reyes Yanes  
(D)

17.

I believe government should be transparent, accountable, and responsive to the people it serves. That starts with making budgets clear and accessible so residents can see exactly how their tax dollars are being used and holding agencies accountable for results. I support stronger oversight, including protecting whistleblowers and ensuring independent audits, because public trust must be earned.

I do not support raising taxes as the first solution. I believe we need to grow our economy by strengthening small businesses, which are the backbone of Ward 1. When our local businesses succeed, they create jobs, grow the tax base, and help fund the services our community depends on. At the same time, part of not increasing taxes means managing our existing resources responsibly. That requires strong oversight, regular audits, and a clear focus on identifying waste and inefficiencies so we can close gaps and reinvest those dollars where they are most needed. I also believe that when public dollars are invested in development, the community must benefit through affordable housing, local hiring, and fair wages.

I am committed to protecting and strengthening our social safety net. Programs like the Child Tax Credit, TANF, and services for survivors of domestic violence are essential lifelines for families. If federal funding is cut, I will act to make sure our residents are not left behind.

I support making our city more affordable and accessible, strong school-based mental health services, and ensuring housing is safe and well-maintained. I also believe we must approach issues like encampments with both compassion and clear standards, ensuring dignity and due process.

# Explanations to Y/N Questions

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Jackie  
**Reyes Yanes**  
**(D)**

17.

Access to healthy food is a basic need. I support building a more equitable food system, investing in underserved communities, and making sure we are tracking outcomes so we can deliver real results.

As your Councilmember, I will take a hands-on approach, showing up, listening, and making sure government works for the people of Ward 1.



Terry  
**Lynch (D)**

18.

These are all really common sense approaches allowing the public to fully know how tax dollars are being spent and allocated while meeting urgent needs. Thank you.

# Explanations to Y/N Questions

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Miguel  
Trindade  
Deramo (D)

19.

I support Councilmember Parker’s proposal to create a tiered surcharge on realized capital gains; 1% charge on capital gains over \$150,000, 2% on gains over \$350,000, and 3% on gains over \$500,000. The proposal, which would increase taxes on realized capital gains primarily on the top 1 percent of DC taxpayers, would help fund essential programs like vouchers for Permanent Supportive Housing and the Child Tax Credit. At the Council, I would support increasing the income tax rates on households reporting over \$1 million in income, which would be meaningful for increasing funding for target programs like filling in the gaps for the Pay Equity Fund.

I support a Land Value Tax on parcels near transit to provide additional funds for WMATA operations, by having a tax system that imposes taxes on the land and any improvements (i.e., buildings on site) separately. The proposal I would support would provide an exemption for sites with existing affordable subsidized/unsubsidized housing or small businesses to offer protection against displacement. The proposed Land Value Tax would be used as a tool that incentivizes developing empty parcels near transit into mixed-use or residential development, as the owner of a site would still have to pay the tax on the land even when it is vacant and not generating any revenue from renting homes and/or commercial space.

I champion maximizing the potential of affordable housing developments on public land. As an ANC Commissioner, I supported creating affordable housing at the 1617 U Street site. However, I am also well aware that when we draw out the development of affordable housing on public property over years of procedural hurdles, we not only prevent families from accessing affordable homes that are needed urgently; we also significantly increase the cost of building

# Explanations to Y/N Questions

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Miguel  
Trindade  
Deramo (D)

19.

housing on these sites. While I support maximizing community benefits and affordability on public land, I would still want to have the public input and community benefit negotiations completed within a reasonable timeline, in a way that does not delay the development of affordable housing or hurt its financial feasibility.

I recognize that protecting the District’s Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC) is crucial: these are progressive and pioneering mechanisms for redistribution that support low- and moderate-income earners amid an affordability crisis in DC. I support protecting the efforts championed by Councilmember Parker, which resulted in strengthening funding for DC’s EITC and CTC (collectively expected to increase economic security for nearly 78,000 children and their families).

I support the DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence’s budget ask for \$4.4 million over FY26 funding for domestic violence survivor services. Under this proposal, \$2.5 million over FY26 funding is necessary to protect core programming and services from cuts, and an additional \$1.9 million to fill gaps for funding culturally specific services, including those serving immigrant, LGBTQ+, unhoused, and justice-involved survivors.

Yes, I would vote to fully fund the “Free Bus” initiative to make Metrobus zero-fare for all riders. Eliminating fares reduces barriers to mobility, speeds up boarding, and sends a clear message that bus service is an essential public good. For many residents, especially those with lower incomes, fare-free service can make a meaningful difference in their daily lives.

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Miguel  
**Trindade  
Deramo (D)**

19.

That said, any funding to offset the loss of fare revenue cannot come at the expense of frequency, reliability, or hours of operation. When bus riders are polled, they consistently say that their top priorities are frequent service and shorter travel times. A bus that comes every 20–30 minutes or gets stuck in traffic is far more burdensome than a modest fare. If going fare-free results in service cuts, longer headways, or reduced reliability, we would be undermining the very people the policy is meant to support.

When we make buses fast, frequent, and reliable – through dedicated lanes, signal priority, and strong operating budgets and staffing levels – we improve life for the people who already depend on transit and make it more attractive for new riders. That combination grows ridership, reduces congestion, and advances our climate and equity goals. A free bus that is unreliable does not meaningfully expand opportunity; a high-quality bus system does.

It's also important to recognize that targeted fare relief programs already exist for those who need it most, including DC Public Schools students, seniors, people with disabilities, and low-income residents. If we pursue fare-free service, we must continue to protect and strengthen service quality. My commitment is clear: support for fare-free buses, but never at the expense of the frequent, dependable transit service that our communities deserve.

I support expanding the Nuisance Abatement Fund to enable the DOB to directly address a broader range of housing code violations (not only emergency or life-threatening situations) to improve the quality of housing for tenants. This strategy would enable the DC government to address housing issues like mold and flooding and then collect

## Explanations to Y/N Questions

**Would you like to elaborate on your answers to any of the Yes/No questions presented?**

**Note:** Only candidates who provided additional explanations will appear below.



Miguel  
**Trindade  
Deramo (D)**

19.

the paid charges from landlords afterward, possibly through special assessment liens (involuntary legal claims placed on private properties). Therefore, I support the proposed STRONG Homes Amendment Act, which would allow the Office of the Attorney General to use the Tenant Receivership Abatement Fund for emergency repairs and services at eligible housing properties.



# CANDIDATES FOR WARD 1

## SHORT ANSWER RESPONSES





## Aparna Raj (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

**Government Transparency & Process: How would you use your platform to ensure residents from all wards, including those from historically underrepresented communities, have voice in the Council’s budget and legislative process?**

“A democratic government should not be limited to people who can take off work, hire lobbyists, or navigate complicated Council procedures. I will work to make the budget and legislative process more accessible, transparent, and accountable to residents across all eight wards.

How information is communicated is key to facilitating more public engagement, and as Councilmember I will build out robust communications including: explainer videos and graphics about upcoming hearings, policy decisions, and major votes on social media, translated in multiple languages, as well as email and traditional mail. Office communications will also be paired with Ward-level outreach through office-hosted town halls and community canvassing. I will also proactively engage residents with outreach to tenant associations, schools, ANCs, mutual aid groups, labor unions, and other neighborhood leaders. Beyond that, I would work to make hearings more predictable by establishing clearer time slots for members of the public testifying at hearings, allowing them to reschedule or shift their testimony time, and providing those signed up to speak with notifications when their turn is approaching. I would also advocate for DC Council offices to all have access to Language Line – a service used by several District agencies to ensure language equity. Finally, I will be transparent with constituents about my own decisions by publicly explaining my votes and positions on budget and complex policy decisions.”



## Aparna Raj (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Government Transparency & Process: What specific oversight initiatives would you pursue to ensure DC agencies are accountable for spending allocations and program delivery?**

“Oversight is one of the most important responsibilities of a Councilmember, and it has to include the people impacted by agency failures. Too often, oversight in DC happens through closed-door briefings, technical reports, or only during scheduled hearings, while residents are left out of the conversation. As an organizer, I would approach oversight differently: by bringing the people directly into the process of governing. The stories and experiences of DC residents should shape the questions we ask agencies and the work we do to make sure those agencies are meeting the needs of the people.

That is why I will push for stronger public reporting requirements with clear performance benchmarks, timelines, and measurable outcomes tied to agency spending. Agencies that repeatedly fail to deliver should be required to submit corrective action plans and return for follow-up oversight hearings until issues are resolved. I will also host ward-based listening sessions and push agencies to create publicly accessible dashboards so residents can track whether agencies are meeting their obligations in real time. And I will proactively canvass the Ward and meet with local leaders to hear from residents about where local agencies are falling short.

Oversight should not be performative. Making sure government works for all of us means conducting rigorous oversight alongside communities, and making sure there are real consequences when agencies miss the mark.”



## Aparna Raj (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: How would you approach building Council consensus around a response to federal threats to DC's budget and self-governance?**

“Leaders have two options when faced with rising authoritarianism: comply or resist. DC residents deserve a government that will fight for us, not comply in advance or abandon our principles out of fear. We know that federal interference in our budget and local laws is not just a procedural problem, it is an attack on self-governance, racial justice, and the ability of DC residents to decide how our public dollars should be used. If elected, I will always fight back against federal interference with all of the tools available to Council.

The Council must remain united in defending DC residents’ right to govern ourselves, which is why I will organize my Council colleagues to join me in pushing back against attacks on DC autonomy by recommitting to and closing loopholes in DC’s Sanctuary Values Act, funding programs that our undocumented neighbors rely on like the Healthcare Alliance, and lobbying Congress to stand with us and advance DC statehood. To defend DC effectively, I will also work closely with the Attorney General, the Mayor, labor unions, ANCs, and other community organizations like Free DC to use every tool available to defend Home Rule.

But our fight cannot end with Home Rule, we need statehood. That is why I will leverage my relationships with regional and national organizations to advance the cause of DC Statehood everywhere. We must be on the frontlines of making statehood an issue that matters not just to DC residents, but to voters across the country.”



## Aparna Raj (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: What legislative actions would you prioritize to address the impacts of federal policies on DC residents, including immigrants, federal workers, and unhoused residents?**

“It is the responsibility of DC government to defend and protect our residents from attacks by a hostile federal government. Since Trump took office, the attacks have been unending - on federal workers, on immigrants, on unhoused residents, on youth of color, and more. I have walked my neighborhood to look out for ICE, packed groceries for people in need, rallied with laid off federal workers, and opposed attacks on our unhoused neighbors while pushing for more support for vouchers and other programs. I know that the attacks we have seen on our autonomy will not end until we are a state, and even then we will need to continue organizing to defend each other.

To best address this, I will fight to pass legislation that reaffirms our right to self-governance and pushes back against violent federal overreach, and lobby Congress to advance DC Statehood. I will prioritize closing loopholes in our Sanctuary Values Act and end MPD collaboration with ICE. I will work to hold public officials who violate our local laws accountable and force transparency on any government agent operating within our city. I will fight to modernize unemployment insurance to make it easier for laid off federal workers to access, and create opportunities for displaced federal workers to find jobs in DC government. And I will work to identify steady, permanent funding for the housing programs we need to end chronic homelessness and protect those populations from attacks by this fascist administration.”

#### **Taxes & Public Deals: What specific tax measures, if any, would you champion in your first term, and what is your approach to building the votes needed to pass them?**

“Budgets are moral documents because the choices we make reflect our values. For too long, DC leaders have balanced budgets on the backs of working class residents instead of asking wealthy corporations and high-income earners to pay their fair share - especially when the



## Aparna Raj (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

federal government has opted to slash the federally-supported social safety net. In my first term, I will champion several revenue raising measures that specifically target out-of-state corporations and DC's ultrawealthy, because no family should struggle to pay rent or put food on the table while others rake in billions.

Specifically, I will work to pass a Business Activity Tax that targets corporations, like lobbying firms, that operate in DC but don't pay local business taxes. I will also work to reform itemized deductions and capital gains taxes so the ultrawealthy are contributing their fair share to the tax base. And I will seek to end ineffective tax abatements on developments that do not deliver on their promises of affordable housing or other amenities for our residents. As an organizer, I plan to bring that approach to the office. I will work with my colleagues to illustrate how tax revenue would benefit specific causes and legislation that they care about (for example, connecting a BAT to funding free universal childcare). And I will also partner with community organizations to mobilize the public, as we've seen with the building momentum around a BAT from childcare advocates this budget cycle."

#### **Taxes & Public Deals: How would you approach the relationship between economic development incentives and equitable returns for DC's communities?**

"For years, the District has made development easier without requiring developers to hold up their end of the bargain and deliver public benefits residents were promised. We have handed out tax abatements, public land, grants, and low-interest loans with far too little accountability. That approach needs to end.

Economic development incentives should only exist when there is a clear public return. As Councilmember, I will prioritize aggressive oversight of the agencies responsible for tax abatements, land dispositions, public development and other projects to ensure they are actually delivering for working class DC residents, especially longtime Black and Latino residents, workers, tenants, and communities facing displacement.



## Aparna Raj (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

That means clawing back public dollars when affordable housing commitments are not met, requiring public development agreements include strong labor agreements and protections, and better enforcement mechanisms to ensure these standards are met. Tax abatements can be useful tools, but they must serve the public good, not simply maximize profits for developers and investors. As an organizer, I believe residents most impacted by development decisions should help shape them, and that these development projects should also create opportunity for more union density. I will bring community voices directly into oversight and fight to ensure public investments create deeply affordable housing, union jobs, and long-term stability for DC communities.”

**Community Safety: Describe your approach to community safety funding: what would you invest in, what would you consider reducing, and how would impacted communities inform those decisions?**

“Every DC resident deserves to feel safe, and real safety means investing in communities and preventing violence before it happens. Crime and violence decline when people have stable housing, good jobs, quality schools, health care, and trusted public services. My approach to community safety will reflect that reality.

Additionally, I will fight for investments in violence interruption, community-based crisis response, behavioral health care, substance use treatment, and a 911 system residents can rely on. I will prioritize youth safety by funding wraparound supports, guaranteeing every school has a counselor and nurse, fighting for universal free out-of-school programs, and extending DPR hours so young people have safe places to gather.

I will also move resources away from approaches that criminalize residents and endanger communities. That includes ending MPD collaboration with ICE, moving away from police for mental health crisis response, and reducing reliance on enforcement-first strategies. We have seen in neighboring cities like Baltimore that violence interruption programs can reduce harm



## Aparna Raj (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

more effectively than traditional policing, and we too should invest in strategies that actually work.

And I will partner with impacted communities on all of these items to shape my budget and legislative agenda. Success means less violent crime, truancy, eviction, youth detention, and deportation, and more trust, stability, and dignity for all DC residents.”

#### **Community Safety: How would you address the intersection of housing insecurity, behavioral health, and community safety in your legislative priorities?**

“Community safety starts with meeting people’s basic needs like dignified housing and access to wraparound supports and services. People are safer when they have stable housing, behavioral health care, and trusted services, not when poverty, homelessness, or mental health crises are treated as crimes. In recent years, we have seen unhoused neighbors harassed and brutalized during encampment sweeps. In 2021, an unhoused person was struck by a bulldozer while in their tent. In 2024, 120 people died while unhoused.

As Councilmember, I will fight to end DC’s cruel response to the intersection of housing insecurity and mental health crises. That starts with fully resourcing our housing continuum of care, from maintaining safe shelters to funding vouchers and wraparound supports that help residents transition into permanent housing. I will also work to prevent homelessness by restoring ERAP and expanding programs that help residents stay housed. DHS’s site-based case management pilot in Ward 3 has shown promising results by providing onsite supports for voucher holders - but programs like this should exist in every ward, not just our wealthiest.

Finally, I will prioritize non-police responses to behavioral health crises & homeless response, expand low-barrier and transitional housing options, and demand safe, dignified shelter spaces. I oppose encampment clearings that displace, and in many cases, physically harm people. Real safety means investing in housing, care, and stability.”



## Aparna Raj (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Food Access: How would you use your position to address food access equity for residents in food-insecure wards while representing the entire District?**

“I fundamentally believe that food is medicine, and every DC resident deserves access to nutritious, affordable food regardless of their zip code. For far too long, Wards 5, 7, and 8 have faced deep inequities in food access because of disinvestment and neglect. While Ward 1 has multiple grocery options, that is not the reality across the District, and we must change it.

That is why I worked at DC Greens for three years, and why I will continue fighting for healthy food access as Councilmember. Representing Ward 1 does not mean only fighting for Ward 1. Every Councilmember has a responsibility to address inequities wherever they exist.

I will work with Councilmembers representing food insecure communities to bring full-service grocery stores to underserved neighborhoods through targeted incentives, community-driven development, and stronger accountability for projects receiving public support. But grocery stores alone are not enough. We also need long-term investments in community-based food systems. That means supporting urban farms, expanding food access programs, and strengthening local food distribution networks that bring fresh produce directly into neighborhoods.

I will also fight to protect SNAP, maintain the Food Policy Council, and ensure the District is prepared to fill gaps if federal funding is reduced. Ending food apartheid in DC requires sustained public investment and treating healthy food as a basic human right.”



## Aparna Raj (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Food Access: What legislative proposals, if any, would you advance to strengthen DC's local food system?**

“Building on the need to address inequities in food access across the District, I would use my legislative role to strengthen DC’s local food system so it is more resilient, community-driven, and rooted in equity.

If elected, I will pursue legislation that ties public incentives for grocery stores and food retailers to clear food access outcomes. If the District is providing tax abatements, land, or subsidies, those investments should be contingent on measurable commitments - especially ensuring full service grocery stores in neighborhoods with the highest levels of food insecurity. I will also work to expand support for a stronger community-based food system. That includes greater resources for urban agriculture programs, supporting food hubs, and scaling successful programs like DC Central Kitchen’s Healthy Corners so that fresh produce is consistently available in neighborhood corner stores across all wards.

Additionally, I will advance policies that strengthen public procurement of locally grown food, particularly in schools, recreation centers, and public facilities. This helps stabilize demand for regional growers while improving food quality for residents.

Food access also requires sustained investment in programs like SNAP, and ensuring DC is prepared to backfill any federal cuts. Strengthening the local food system means treating food access as infrastructure: something the government has a responsibility to build, sustain, and equitably distribute across the DC.

As Councilmember, I will fight to end DC’s cruel response to the intersection of housing insecurity and mental health crises. That starts with fully resourcing our housing continuum of care, from maintaining safe shelters to funding vouchers and wraparound supports that help residents transition into permanent housing. I will also work to prevent homelessness by



## Aparna Raj (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

restoring ERAP and expanding programs that help residents stay housed. DHS's site-based case management pilot in Ward 3 has shown promising results by providing onsite supports for voucher holders - but programs like this should exist in every ward, not just our wealthiest.

Finally, I will prioritize non-police responses to behavioral health crises & homeless response, expand low-barrier and transitional housing options, and demand safe, dignified shelter spaces. I oppose encampment clearings that displace, and in many cases, physically harm people. Real safety means investing in housing, care, and stability.”

**Optional: Please select the top three policy areas you believe are most critical for the DC Council to address in the next two years:** Government Transparency & Process, Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy, Taxes & Public Deals, Community Safety, Housing Insecurity & Behavioral Health, Food Access

Candidate's Selections:

**Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy**

**Housing Insecurity & Behavioral Health**

Other: **Overall Cost Of Living**



## Rashida Brown (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

**Government Transparency & Process: How would you use your platform to ensure residents from all wards, including those from historically underrepresented communities, have voice in the Council’s budget and legislative process?**

“Something that I have loved doing as an ANC is genuine and deep community engagement on issues that impact my constituents. Not everyone has time to go to an ANC meeting, or a Council hearing, and that’s why being out in the neighborhoods I serve, providing updates and listening to people’s concerns, has been a cornerstone of my public service. I’ll bring that approach to the Council when it comes to budget and legislative priorities. I’ll hold community forums, meet with people in coffee shops and libraries and at farmers markets. And when I become a committee chair I’ll hold hearings in the communities most impacted by the issue being taken up. The Council also needs to do better on language access, ensuring that hearing notices are in multiple languages and that hearings provide translation services to all those who need them. This is especially important to me with Ward 1 having the largest immigrant population in the city.”

**Government Transparency & Process: What specific oversight initiatives would you pursue to ensure DC agencies are accountable for spending allocations and program delivery?**

“When I was a policy director at the Office of the State Superintendent, I knew that not delivering on my responsibilities would be letting down children and families who most needed pre-K and childcare. There was no question in my mind that I was accountable to District residents and I had to exceed expectations. I’m so proud of the work I did on Thrive by Five and My Childcare DC, and I love to see that work coming to fruition in classrooms all across the city. As Councilmember I’ll do rigorous oversight, not just during Performance Oversight Hearings once a year, but year-round based on feedback from constituents and my own critical review of agency performance data. As a social work professional, I will always use my data lens and National Association of Social Work principles and values to drive my decision-making,



## Rashida Brown (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

particularly on these issues. Budgetary oversight throughout the year is just as critical as the budget allocations themselves. Under the Bowser administration we have seen Council priorities reprogrammed away with little to no transparency or accountability. I'll work with the DC Council budget office to ensure the Mayor and the CFO are following the law and not exceeding their authority at the expense of residents."

#### **Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: How would you approach building Council consensus around a response to federal threats to DC's budget and self-governance?**

"DC faces the gravest threat to Home Rule in its history. The federal administration has blocked \$1 billion of our budget, attempted to federalize MPD, and deployed troops in our streets. This isn't just about autonomy; it's about protecting our residents from state violence. As Councilmember, I will:

**Present a Unified Front:** I'll work strategically with the Mayor to coordinate legal and legislative resistance. While I will hold any local administration accountable, federal threats demand we stand together to denounce overreach.

**Leverage Federal Expertise:** With seven years of experience as a federal lobbyist, I know how to navigate Capitol Hill. I will work with congressional allies to introduce protective legislation, use committee hearings to expose abuses, and pressure the federal government to release our budget.

**Mobilize Grassroots Power:** I will organize with the Free DC movement and Ward 1 residents to build the political pressure necessary for statehood. We cannot remain second-class citizens subject to congressional whims.



## Rashida Brown (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

Ward 1 needs a fighter who will use every legislative, legal, and organizing tool to protect our democracy and our neighbors. I am ready to lead that fight for our liberation and self-governance.”

**Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: What legislative actions would you prioritize to address the impacts of federal policies on DC residents, including immigrants, federal workers, and unhoused residents?**

“I will use the Council’s legislative powers to close loopholes allowing local cooperation with federal authorities like ICE. DC’s sanctuary status is hollow if local resources facilitate deportations. I will introduce or co-sponsor legislation to explicitly prohibit DC employees and agencies from cooperating with ICE unless legally required, prevent the use of DC facilities for immigration enforcement, strengthen protections for sensitive locations like schools and hospitals, and create penalties for policy violations.

Through oversight and investigative powers, I will hold hearings to document federal overreach and its human cost. I will demand DC agencies report on ICE cooperation requests, National Guard impacts on community trust, the fiscal toll of blocked budget funds, and legal violations. These hearings will create a public record of abuses, amplify the voices of harmed residents, and build political pressure for resistance by inviting legal experts, advocates, and impacted neighbors to testify.

Finally, I will partner with legal clinics and nonprofits to mobilize and train residents to protect themselves. This includes funding “know-your-rights” trainings, supporting legal defense funds and rapid response networks, and ensuring residents understand Fourth Amendment protections. My decade of community organizing with Georgia Avenue Thrive proved that collective power can resist oppression. We must build community infrastructure that allows us to protect ourselves.”



## Rashida Brown (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

**Taxes & Public Deals: What specific tax measures, if any, would you champion in your first term, and what is your approach to building the votes needed to pass them?**

“I strongly support increasing taxes on high-income households, immense wealth, and highly profitable corporations. DC has one of the highest inequality rates in the nation; while working families struggle with rent and childcare, untaxed wealth remains untapped for essential services.

**Specific Tax Policies I’ll Champion:**

**Business Activity Tax (BAT):** I support a 1.5-2% BAT to close loopholes for pass-through businesses—often non-resident owned—that shift the tax burden onto local resident-owned businesses.

**Progressive Capital Gains:** I will fight to raise capital gains taxes by 1% for incomes over \$500k, 2% for \$750k–\$1M, and 3% over \$1M. Investment wealth should not be taxed less than labor.

**Property & Land Tax:** I support higher taxes on luxury property sales over \$3M to fund affordable housing and a Land Value Tax to discourage vacant lots and boost housing supply.

**Corporate & Estate Reform:** I will move to close corporate tax haven schemes and strengthen the estate tax to address intergenerational wealth gaps and racial inequality.

These are common-sense reforms ensuring those who benefit most from our economy contribute their fair share. Racial equity requires progressive taxation, and I will fight to make DC’s tax system truly just.”



## Rashida Brown (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

**Community Safety: Describe your approach to community safety funding: what would you invest in, what would you consider reducing, and how would impacted communities inform those decisions?**

“As a Ward 1 resident for 20 years and an ANC Commissioner for a decade, I view public safety as a neighbor and organizer, not a distant policymaker. I co-founded Georgia Avenue Thrive, a community-led initiative that addresses safety through economic development and collaborative problem-solving rather than increased policing. My experience proves that real safety stems from investing in people, not expanding systems that have historically traumatized Black and brown communities.

While data shows DC crime is trending down, our city is under federal attack. We must leverage the Council’s power to scale community-based investments that are proven to reduce violence. DC has a strong legislative foundation for justice, yet our \$500M+ safety budget remains heavily skewed toward MPD and jails.

As Councilmember, I will fight to rebalance these investments, redirecting resources toward prevention and support services that stop harm before it occurs. This means prioritizing funding for violence interrupters, mental health crisis response teams, and youth employment. My work on Georgia Avenue demonstrated that community-led infrastructure can transform neighborhoods from the ground up; I will bring that same evidence-based, community-first advocacy to the DC Council.”

**Community Safety: How would you address the intersection of housing insecurity, behavioral health, and community safety in your legislative priorities?**

“As a former Policy Analyst for the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services, I helped develop the Homeward DC 2015-2020 strategic plan. I’ve been in the rooms where housing decisions are made, witnessing both the promise of bold commitments and the failure of their implementation.



## Rashida Brown (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

Today, we are moving away from our goals. The FY27 budget's cuts to housing programs is unconscionable. Our unhoused neighbors deserve dignified housing—which means more than a roof. It means private, stable spaces where people have autonomy and agency. It means fully funding Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) that pairs housing with wraparound services like mental health support and job training, moving away from dehumanizing congregate shelter models. It also means protecting Local Rent Supplement Program (LRSP) vouchers so families aren't displaced from their communities and schools.

Dignified housing recognizes that those experiencing homelessness are human beings deserving of safety and respect. As Ward 1 Councilmember, I will fight to ensure these programs are fully funded. I will make the moral case that no one should be unhoused in this wealthy city, the economic case that PSH is more cost-effective than the revolving door of emergency services, and the policy case that we already know what works—we just need the political will to fund it at scale.”

#### **Food Access: How would you use your position to address food access equity for residents in food-insecure wards while representing the entire District?**

“As a social worker, I've sat with parents making impossible choices between paying rent or feeding their children. While DC has immense resources, systemic wealth hoarding means many Black and brown residents cannot afford basic needs. Despite this, the Mayor has repeatedly balanced the budget on the backs of the poor. These cuts are a coordinated assault on families who rely on these lifelines for survival.

Having worked in the Mayor's office on health and human services policy, I know these aren't just budget lines—they are survival. When federal programs fail, DC must step up. I will establish emergency funds to replace lost SNAP benefits and supplement reduced TANF assistance. Because many eligible residents remain unenrolled, I will fund community navigators, multilingual outreach, and modernized, streamlined application systems to ensure no one is left behind.



## Rashida Brown (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

I will also support the Attorney General in challenging illegal federal cuts to Medicaid and SNAP. Furthermore, I'll expand funding for food banks, community health centers, and programs like Produce Plus, Joyful Food Markets, and Produce Rx. I will also support mutual aid networks that provide immediate relief while we fight for systemic solutions. We cannot abandon our neighbors to federal cruelty; I will use every legislative, budgetary, and organizing tool to protect them.”

#### **Food Access: What legislative proposals, if any, would you advance to strengthen DC's local food system?**

“See answer above.”

**Optional: Please select the top three policy areas you believe are most critical for the DC Council to address in the next two years:** Government Transparency & Process, Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy, Taxes & Public Deals, Community Safety, Housing Insecurity & Behavioral Health, Food Access

Candidate's Selections:

**Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy**  
**Community Safety**  
**Housing Insecurity & Behavioral Health**



## Terry Lynch (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

**Government Transparency & Process: How would you use your platform to ensure residents from all wards, including those from historically underrepresented communities, have voice in the Council's budget and legislative process?**

"I would urge that we have budget hearings held in all wards - likely 2 per ward. I believe many lower income residents do not use computers we might consider phone polls on key budgets issues as well to garner resident feedback."

**Government Transparency & Process: What specific oversight initiatives would you pursue to ensure DC agencies are accountable for spending allocations and program delivery?**

"They should provide monthly reports on performance results and budget expenditures that are easily understood and posted to maximize review by the public. I would work closely with the DC auditor on oversight efforts surrounding performance and expenditures. questions we ask agencies and the work we do to make sure those agencies are meeting the needs of the people."

**Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: How would you approach building Council consensus around a response to federal threats to DC's budget and self-governance?**

"The key is building coalitions with neighborhood civic associations across all 8 wards as well as with the Councilmembers on joint issues of concern that cross ward boundaries such as federal oversight utility costs safety etc. We need a grassroots citywide coalition to effectively stand against Fedeeal Overreach and then expand that to a DMV wide and nationwide contacts. Our residents have connections in all 50'states we must call on and build upon."



## Terry Lynch (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: What legislative actions would you prioritize to address the impacts of federal policies on DC residents, including immigrants, federal workers, and unhoused residents?**

“It is the responsibility of DC government to defend and protect our residents from attacks by a hostile federal government. Since Trump took office, the attacks have been unending - on federal workers, on immigrants, on unhoused residents, on youth of color, and more. I have walked my neighborhood to look out for ICE, packed groceries for people in need, rallied with laid off federal workers, and opposed attacks on our unhoused neighbors while pushing for more support for vouchers and other programs. I know that the attacks we have seen on our autonomy will not end until we are a state, and even then we will need to continue organizing to defend each other.

To best address this, I will fight to pass legislation that reaffirms our right to self-governance and pushes back against violent federal overreach, and lobby Congress to advance DC Statehood. I will prioritize closing loopholes in our Sanctuary Values Act and end MPD collaboration with ICE. I will work to hold public officials who violate our local laws accountable and force transparency on any government agent operating within our city. I will fight to modernize unemployment insurance to make it easier for laid off federal workers to access, and create opportunities for displaced federal workers to find jobs in DC government. And I will work to identify steady, permanent funding for the housing programs we need to end chronic homelessness and protect those populations from attacks by this fascist administration.”

#### **Taxes & Public Deals: What specific tax measures, if any, would you champion in your first term, and what is your approach to building the votes needed to pass them?**

“I would seek to have the earnings of pro athletes earned here taxed. I support the concept of a billionaires tax and / or an increase tax on the highest 1 per cent of households. Also we need the many many vacant properties taxed at the right level - many are taxed as if still occupied.



## Terry Lynch (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

Other Councilmembers would surely see the benefit of applying those earnings to child care costs, utility assistance and affordable housing.”

#### **Taxes & Public Deals: How would you approach the relationship between economic development incentives and equitable returns for DC’s communities?**

“We have many many underdeveloped DC owned sites and vacant privately owned buildings. Each of these sites should be evaluated for the benefits of mixed income development - new housing, retail and jobs and property taxes generated. I believe there are few incentives needed to get these projects underway in terms of subsidies.

I had put in place requirements for downtown housing and the property owners always wanted subsidies for the development but no subsidies were needed frankly. I only support subsidies in very rare cases with exceptional circumstances.”

#### **Community Safety: Describe your approach to community safety funding: what would you invest in, what would you consider reducing, and how would impacted communities inform those decisions?**

“No more police - yes to getting police walking patrols. DPW needs to tow the many out of state plates owing thousands in unpaid fines which are often illegally parked. We need parking enforcement on Sundays in high crime areas as drug trafficking does not take Sundays off. We need to make sure street lights work in public space and night lights on private developments as well. We need to work with ANC’s to identify hotspots as well as grassroots immunity level suggestions for making neighborhoods safer.”



## Terry Lynch (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

**Community Safety: How would you address the intersection of housing insecurity, behavioral health, and community safety in your legislative priorities?**

“First 100 days introduce a use it or lose it bill - properties vacant for 3 or more years should be bought by the city at fair market value and put back on the market for mixed use and affordable housing developments. The key to more jobs safer streets healthier neighborhoods right now in Ward 1 is reactivating the long stretches of vacant properties along Georgia Avenue U Street and 14th Street.”

**Food Access: How would you use your position to address food access equity for residents in food-insecure wards while representing the entire District?**

“We need to identify all possible sites where a grocery store could be placed or anchor a mixed use development and put these out to bid for occupancy to all grocers particularly smaller share venues that are anxious to expand their footprint. If the city can identify the sites and provide the safety efforts needed we can address food deserts.”

**Food Access: What legislative proposals, if any, would you advance to strengthen DC’s local food system?**

“Review what bureaucratic hurdles are slowing or preventing grocery stores from where most needed. I got so many deals done in downtown to create a Living Downtown...we need to meet with property owners one by one like we did in downtown to activate long vacant sites and buildings to bring new stores housing retail and community services ...we can get more grocery stores but it will be a site by site effort and we have so many possible venues in Ward 1 for that which have been allowed to stay vacant over the years.”



## Terry Lynch (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

**Optional: Please select the top three policy areas you believe are most critical for the DC Council to address in the next two years:** Government Transparency & Process, Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy, Taxes & Public Deals, Community Safety, Housing Insecurity & Behavioral Health, Food Access

Candidate's Selections:

**Community Safety**

Other: **Health and Education**

“We need birth to death improves health programs and the best education and enrichment programs so our youth can succeed in life.”



## Miguel Trindade Deramo (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Government Transparency & Process: How would you use your platform to ensure residents from all wards, including those from historically underrepresented communities, have voice in the Council's budget and legislative process?**

“Collecting public input from DC residents during once-yearly oversight and budget hearings is insufficient. As a Councilmember, I will be intentional about scheduling budget townhalls, where we can discuss priorities for the budget process and what can be done to fill in the gaps in the Council appropriations. I will also be intentional about holding listening sessions and committee meetings, both virtual and in-person, during different times of the day to ensure that everyone has the option to attend, including young people and working parents. As a Councilmember, I will be committed to meeting people where they are, in whichever language they are most comfortable. I am proud to be multilingual, and as the first Latino ever elected to the DC Council, I will ensure that language is not a barrier to receiving government services or to adequate representation in the halls of power. I am comfortable interfacing with constituents in Spanish, which is an accommodation that most (if not all) Councilmembers are currently unable to provide. Especially after the traumatic year for our DC Latino community – most painfully felt in Ward 1 – electing a Latino legislator will be an important act of defiance as well as solidarity.”

#### **Government Transparency & Process: What specific oversight initiatives would you pursue to ensure DC agencies are accountable for spending allocations and program delivery?**

“Accountability is a cornerstone for public trust in government institutions, and that is why I believe the most progressive thing we can do as elected officials is to show people that government works for them. As a Councilmember, I will be proactive about exercising my oversight authority. I will not wait to ask questions during once-yearly oversight hearings, but rather proactively use my authority to subpoena documents and require testimony to receive answers from DC agencies. I will also use my legislative authority to create better systems for collecting and sharing real-time public data, including complaints received by constituents or agency staff members about misconduct or unresolved issues. For tracking program outcomes,



## Miguel Trindade Deramo (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

I believe that we should move away from focusing exclusively on expenditure towards tracking outcomes that capture program effectiveness. For example, we should be tracking how many unhoused people who received access to services by our outreach staffers were actually connected to housing and remained stably housed, rather than looking exclusively at public dollars allotted to this work and how many outreach workers attempted to reach out to people experiencing homelessness in the District.”

#### **Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: How would you approach building Council consensus around a response to federal threats to DC’s budget and self-governance?**

“As a Commissioner, I founded the ANC Home Rule Caucus, comprising around 75 commissioners across the District, which has coordinated a range of initiatives in response to federal overreach. We partnered with Free DC to deliver advocacy letters and resolutions directly to key offices on the Hill. As a Councilmember, I will scale up these efforts. I will prioritize assessing whether our current federal-affairs apparatus (the Mayor’s Office of Federal and Regional Affairs, plus one federal-affairs liaison position in the Council) is sufficient to advocate for the District’s priorities across the federal executive and legislative branches, especially at this moment. I will also work closely with the Delegate’s office and the shadow delegation, my colleagues at the Council, and the executive branch to speak in a unified voice: Congress should not be able to exploit divisions among DC’s elected leaders to thwart our autonomy. I will also continue to strengthen the collaborative relationships that DC has successfully built with the Virginia and Maryland delegations to ensure solidarity for DC. At the Council, I will vote for legislation that would benefit the District, even if we expect that Congress may overturn it. Some Councilmembers are wary of passing laws that might attract Congressional disapproval; however, this posture amounts to obedience in advance.”



## Miguel Trindade Deramo (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy: What legislative actions would you prioritize to address the impacts of federal policies on DC residents, including immigrants, federal workers, and unhoused residents?**

“I’m proud to have the strongest record of anyone in this race in terms of opposing this federal takeover. While I recognize the inherent imbalance of power between the District and the federal government, I will navigate that imbalance creatively with the power we do have to advance the best interests of DC residents. I do not support MPD cooperation with ICE. Law enforcement officers should not be able to conceal their identities, especially during legally dubious operations. I will advocate for policies that remove anonymity and put transparency front and center. DC has very clear laws on when it is appropriate for individuals with violent criminal records to be turned over to federal authorities after they present lawful documentation, including a judicial warrant, to take them into custody. Local law enforcement resources should be reserved to maintain DC’s public safety, not carry out federal immigration law enforcement. I will introduce a bill to update our sanctuary law accordingly, to expand the prohibition on information-sharing to cover both in-custody and detained individuals and provide protections against warrantless civil immigration enforcement at sensitive locations like hospitals, schools, and places of worship. I will work to create an Office of New Americans, as many other large cities have done. As a former federal worker myself, and as the partner of a DOGE’d employee of USAID, I am extremely sensitive to the need to slow the brain drain from our city.”

#### **Taxes & Public Deals: What specific tax measures, if any, would you champion in your first term, and what is your approach to building the votes needed to pass them?**

“I support changes to ensure that wealth is taxed properly and progressively. The adoption of a tiered property tax is a good example of such a reform. We should likewise look to lower the exemption on estate tax and decouple from the federal stepped-up basis. I am especially supportive of policies like split-rate property tax, which both captures revenue and encourages productive use of land – thereby contributing to our goals in other areas, such as commercial vibrancy and housing production. Automating the application of Schedule H for owners



## Miguel Trindade Deramo (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

and renters, as suggested by Just Recovery DC, is an excellent idea. Many of the reforms proposed by the Tax Revision Commission, such as a business activity tax, are interesting; it is unacceptable that the commission did not complete its work and as a Councilmember I will look to reauthorize it with clear expectations and deadlines. We should not engage in regressive taxation, such as the rise in sales tax that is about to take effect. The DC Council recently adopted changes to the taxation system that funded important programs like the Pay Equity Fund and expanded our Child Tax Credit. These changes were reasonable and well-conceived, and as a Councilmember I will work with my colleagues to look to that model in crafting future revisions to ensure the longevity of our essential social services by taxing wealth properly and progressively in the District.”

### **Taxes & Public Deals: How would you approach the relationship between economic development incentives and equitable returns for DC’s communities?**

“DC’s revitalization efforts have been disproportionately focused on west of the river, specifically downtown and targeted locations, to the detriment of our residents who live in other parts of the city. I believe in reviving DC’s economy by bringing back the urbanist policies that have helped DC thrive in the past. I will focus on attracting new residents, incentivizing new businesses, revitalizing and diversifying local economies, and creating livable neighborhoods. This work begins with establishing a clear vision for each neighborhood and commercial corridor, with a buy-in from local communities and business owners. For example, Ward 1 is the heart of the city, yet we struggle with vacant storefronts and overdue maintenance. We know what worked in the past but was lost due to disinvestment. The disastrous transition of our streetery program, for example, represented a failure of government agencies to develop policy collaboratively with stakeholders, and of the DC Council to remedy an unworkable situation. As a result, we lost our profit-generating (and very popular) streeteries. We need to embrace and to activate Washingtonians’ entrepreneurial spirit. DC, especially Ward 1, has so much untapped cultural and human capital, including the legacy of Black Broadway and 14th Street’s role as a Latino commercial and cultural corridor. The survival and growth of these resources will require smart policy choices and conscientious implementation.”



## Miguel Trindade Deramo (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

**Community Safety: Describe your approach to community safety funding: what would you invest in, what would you consider reducing, and how would impacted communities inform those decisions?**

“The best public safety strategy is to prevent crime before it happens. At the Council, I will invest in anti-crime measures that actually work, like violence interruption (VI), through better funding, insisting that investments be based on rigorous research and data analysis, and supporting VI at all levels, especially at schools. I have advocated repeatedly for this as a Commissioner. To advance public safety for our community, we must re-commit MPD to community policing, including its statutory obligation to convene a community policing working group and publish a report on community policing every two years. While I do believe that we need to arrive at a proper staffing footprint for MPD, my support is subject to several caveats, including proper management of resources, optimizing recruitment and retention, and reviving promising initiatives from the Police Reform Commission, including having behavioral healthcare professionals respond to 911 calls that do not require an MPD response. We know that we are wasting money by paying MPD employees overtime rather than hiring adequately. We have also learned from the DC Auditor that MPD isn’t tracking and deploying staff in a sophisticated way that promotes efficiency. We need to address this problem before expanding MPD staffing. I would also prefer to have analyses from the Auditor inform the target number of officers, rather than relying on MPD alone, historic hiring levels, or political calculations to furnish that value.”

**Community Safety: How would you address the intersection of housing insecurity, behavioral health, and community safety in your legislative priorities?**

“Research shows that, in addition to holding individuals who commit felonies accountable, having a well-funded and efficient social safety net can help improve public safety. As a Councilmember, I will prioritize access to stable, safe, and affordable housing. That is why I support creating more subsidized affordable homes with supportive services, expanding our stock of rent-stabilized homes, and providing sufficient rental assistance.



## Miguel Trindade Deramo (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

I also support ensuring access to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

At the Council, I will push for ensuring the DC Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) is well resourced and staffed to provide mental health support to Washingtonians who could not afford it otherwise. This includes supporting and strengthening DBH's Community Response Team, a multidisciplinary team that provides outreach to people experiencing homelessness and pre-arrest diversion services. As I mentioned in my previous answer, the best public safety strategy is to prevent crime before it happens; as a Councilmember, I will invest in effective violence interruption programs at all levels, including street outreach.”

#### **Food Access: How would you use your position to address food access equity for residents in food-insecure wards while representing the entire District?**

“DC’s executive branch has been disproportionately focused on west of the river, specifically downtown and targeted locations, to the detriment of our residents east of the river (EOTR). One key indicator is food deserts: whereas Ward 3 has 17 full-service grocery stores, Wards 7 and 8 collectively have 7. DC’s approach to addressing food deserts has largely relied on financial incentives for the private sector, which failed in expanding the number of full-service grocery stores in Wards 7 and 8. As a Councilmember, while I will be representing Ward 1, I will push for targeted investments in public-private partnerships that include local organizations and community leaders EOTR. One example that the DC government should work on replicating is the Marion Barry Avenue Market and Café in Ward 8, which was established through a targeted investment from DC’s Food Access Fund in collaboration with Dreaming Out Loud, as a non-profit partner.

The store, which sells locally grown produce at accessible prices with sliding-scale and SNAP-friendly options, is also focused on hiring community members from Ward 8. This model should be replicated by expanding resources for such public-private partnerships.”



## Miguel Trindade Deramo (D) Candidate for WARD 1

### Short Answer Responses

#### **Food Access: What legislative proposals, if any, would you advance to strengthen DC's local food system?**

“At the Council, I will stabilize funding for the suite of programs designed to support equitable access to local healthy food options, including the Urban Farm Tax Abatement, which offers up to a 90% property tax abatement for residents whose private property is actively used as an urban farm, and the Urban Agriculture Infrastructure and Operations Grant program, which offers funding to support the District’s urban farms. I will also support the DC Department of Parks and Recreation’s efforts to partner with nonprofits operating seven urban farms citywide. The DC government should explore expanding this partnership with a focus on areas that are food deserts due to systemic barriers and underinvestment. I will also push for expanding efforts to support school gardens that can serve as small-scale urban farms. In the absence of a dedicated program for food cooperatives, I support investing in programs like the DMV Good Food Fund, a private fund that provides loans to boost equitable access to local healthy food options.”

**Optional: Please select the top three policy areas you believe are most critical for the DC Council to address in the next two years:** Government Transparency & Process, Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy, Taxes & Public Deals, Community Safety, Housing Insecurity & Behavioral Health, Food Access

Candidate’s Selections:

**Federal Overreach & Budget/Defense of Democracy**  
**Community Safety**  
**Housing Insecurity & Behavioral Health**

FAIR BUDGET  
≥ COALITION

# CANDIDATES FOR WARD 5



# The Candidates for Ward 5

## CANDIDATES 22-26



**22** Bernita  
Carmichael (D)



**23** Bridget K.  
French (D)



**24** Zachary  
Parker (D)



**25** Joyce  
Robinson-Paul (G)



**26** Jeffrey  
Kihien-Palza (R)

**FAIR BUDGET**  
≥ COALITION

# **CANDIDATES FOR WARD 5**

**YES OR NO RESPONSES**

# Y/N Questions (set 1 of 6) to Candidates for WARD 5

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

22. BERNITA CARMICHAEL (D)  
 23. BRIDGET K. FRENCH (D)  
 24. ZACHARY PARKER (D)

25. JOYCE ROBINSON-PAUL (G)  
 26. JEFFREY KIHLEN-PALZA (R)

**1. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support legislation mandating that all DC agency budgets include detailed line-item breakdowns in publicly available, word format?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

**2. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support legislation requiring that agency-level budget submissions to the Mayor be made publicly available before the Mayor transmits the proposed budget to the Council?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

**3. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support holding an annual stand-alone hearing on revenue matters in the Committee of the Whole?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

**4. Accountability & Transparency: Oversight:** Do you support strengthening whistleblower protections for DC government employees who report any form of wrongdoing, including but not limited to waste, fraud, mismanagement, abuse of authority, violations of law or regulation, and threats to public health or safety?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 2 of 6) to Candidates for WARD 5

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

22. BERNITA CARMICHAEL (D)  
 23. BRIDGET K. FRENCH (D)  
 24. ZACHARY PARKER (D)

25. JOYCE ROBINSON-PAUL (G)  
 26. JEFFREY KIHLEN-PALZA (R)

**5. Accountability & Transparency: Oversight:** Do you support requiring the public disclosure of all points of contact, including in-person meetings, phone calls, electronic communications, and virtual meetings, between Council offices and registered lobbyists related to pending budget or legislative matters?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

**6. Accountability & Transparency: Oversight:** Do you support an independent audit of all active tax incentive programs and public subsidies to evaluate whether they have delivered promised community benefits?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

**7. Home Rule & Federal Autonomy:** Do you support DC's right to spend all locally-raised revenue without Congressional approval?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

**8. Home Rule & Federal Autonomy:** Do you support establishing a standing Council task force that meets at least once a month to monitor and respond to federal actions affecting DC's autonomy?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 3 of 6) to Candidates for WARD 5

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

22. BERNITA CARMICHAEL (D)  
 23. BRIDGET K. FRENCH (D)  
 24. ZACHARY PARKER (D)

25. JOYCE ROBINSON-PAUL (G)  
 26. JEFFREY KIHLEN-PALZA (R)

**9. Home Rule & Federal Autonomy:** Would you publicly oppose any federal effort to place DC under increased Congressional control, including attempts to change the elected status of the Attorney General or alter the structure of DC's police force?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	N

**10. Economic Justice & Tax Reform:** Do you support tax reforms that would require the wealthiest DC residents and businesses to increase their tax contributions, such as new taxes on capital gains and high incomes?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	N

**11. Economic Justice & Tax Reform:** Do you support creating a Land Value Tax to generate dedicated revenue for WMATA operations?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	N

**12. Economic Justice & Tax Reform:** Do you support requiring that publicly financed development deals include enforceable community benefit agreements with affordable housing, local hiring, and living wage provisions?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 4 of 6) to Candidates for WARD 5

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

22. BERNITA CARMICHAEL (D)  
 23. BRIDGET K. FRENCH (D)  
 24. ZACHARY PARKER (D)

25. JOYCE ROBINSON-PAUL (G)  
 26. JEFFREY KIHLEN-PALZA (R)

**13. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Would you support emergency budget legislation to backfill critical social services in the event of federal funding cuts to DC programs?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

**14. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Do you support providing \$56 million in recurring funding for the DC Child Tax Credit to benefit the families of approximately 70,000 children?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

**15. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Would you support legislation to protect Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits from proposed cuts to cost-of-living adjustments, time limits, and sanctions?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

**16. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Do you support increasing funding by \$4.4 million over FY26 levels to the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants and the Department of Human Services to expand domestic violence survivor services, including targeted support for underserved communities, primary prevention programming, and flexible cash assistance for survivors?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 5 of 6) to Candidates for WARD 5

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

22. BERNITA CARMICHAEL (D)  
 23. BRIDGET K. FRENCH (D)  
 24. ZACHARY PARKER (D)

25. JOYCE ROBINSON-PAUL (G)  
 26. JEFFREY KIHLEN-PALZA (R)

**17. Housing, Transportation, & Behavioral Health:** Would you support funding fare-free Metro buses for DC residents through a fare buy-down plan with WMATA?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

**18. Housing, Transportation, & Behavioral Health:** Do you support maintaining current funding levels for the School-Based Behavioral Health program in DC public and public charter schools?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	N

**19. Housing, Transportation, & Behavioral Health:** Do you support expanding the Nuisance Abatement Fund to enable the Department of Buildings to directly repair housing code violations?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	N

**20. Housing, Transportation & Behavioral Health:** Would you support legislation to create standardized criteria, definitions, and due process protections for any government actions related to encampments?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 6 of 6) to Candidates for WARD 5

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

22. BERNITA CARMICHAEL (D)  
 23. BRIDGET K. FRENCH (D)  
 24. ZACHARY PARKER (D)

25. JOYCE ROBINSON-PAUL (G)  
 26. JEFFREY KIHLEN-PALZA (R)

**21. Food Access & Equity:** Would you support legislation to establish a Food First Responders Platform enabling community organizations to respond during food emergencies?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

**22. Food Access & Equity:** Would you support including locally-sourced food procurement requirements in DC government food service contracts?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

**23. Food Access & Equity:** Do you support dedicated local funding for food access infrastructure in communities east of the Anacostia River?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

**24. Food Access & Equity:** Do you support requiring annual public reporting on food access metrics, including food retail density, SNAP utilization, and diet-related health outcomes, disaggregated by ward?

22	23	24	25	26
-	-	-	-	Y

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

Y  
FAIR BUDGET  
≥ COALITION

N  
**CANDIDATES FOR  
WARD 6**



# The Candidates for WARD 6

## CANDIDATES 27-30



**27** Gloria Ann  
Nauden (D)



**28** Charles  
Allen (D)



**29** Michael  
Murphy (D)



**30** Jorge  
Rice (R)

Y  
FAIR BUDGET  
≥ COALITION

# CANDIDATES FOR WARD 6

N

YES OR NO RESPONSES



# Y/N Questions (set 1 of 6) to Candidates for **WARD 6**

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

27. GLORIA ANN NAUDEN (D)  
28. CHARLES ALLEN (D)

29. MICHAEL MURPHY (D)  
30. JORGE RICE (R)

**1. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support legislation mandating that all DC agency budgets include detailed line-item breakdowns in publicly available, word format?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

**2. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support legislation requiring that agency-level budget submissions to the Mayor be made publicly available before the Mayor transmits the proposed budget to the Council?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

**3. Accountability & Transparency: Budget Disclosures:** Would you support holding an annual stand-alone hearing on revenue matters in the Committee of the Whole?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

**4. Accountability & Transparency: Oversight:** Do you support strengthening whistleblower protections for DC government employees who report any form of wrongdoing, including but not limited to waste, fraud, mismanagement, abuse of authority, violations of law or regulation, and threats to public health or safety?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 2 of 6) to Candidates for WARD 6

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

27. GLORIA ANN NAUDEN (D)  
28. CHARLES ALLEN (D)

29. MICHAEL MURPHY (D)  
30. JORGE RICE (R)

**5. Accountability & Transparency: Oversight:** Do you support requiring the public disclosure of all points of contact, including in-person meetings, phone calls, electronic communications, and virtual meetings, between Council offices and registered lobbyists related to pending budget or legislative matters?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

**6. Accountability & Transparency: Oversight:** Do you support an independent audit of all active tax incentive programs and public subsidies to evaluate whether they have delivered promised community benefits?

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**7. Home Rule & Federal Autonomy:** Do you support DC's right to spend all locally-raised revenue without Congressional approval?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

**8. Home Rule & Federal Autonomy:** Do you support establishing a standing Council task force that meets at least once a month to monitor and respond to federal actions affecting DC's autonomy?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

## RESPONSE KEY:

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# Y/N Questions (set 3 of 6) to Candidates for **WARD 6**

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

27. GLORIA ANN NAUDEN (D)  
28. CHARLES ALLEN (D)

29. MICHAEL MURPHY (D)  
30. JORGE RICE (R)

**9. Home Rule & Federal Autonomy:** Would you publicly oppose any federal effort to place DC under increased Congressional control, including attempts to change the elected status of the Attorney General or alter the structure of DC's police force?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

**10. Economic Justice & Tax Reform:** Do you support tax reforms that would require the wealthiest DC residents and businesses to increase their tax contributions, such as new taxes on capital gains and high incomes?

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## RESPONSE KEY:

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# Y/N Questions (set 4 of 6) to Candidates for **WARD 6**

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

27. GLORIA ANN NAUDEN (D)  
28. CHARLES ALLEN (D)

29. MICHAEL MURPHY (D)  
30. JORGE RICE (R)

**13. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Would you support emergency budget legislation to backfill critical social services in the event of federal funding cuts to DC programs?

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**14. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Do you support providing \$56 million in recurring funding for the DC Child Tax Credit to benefit the families of approximately 70,000 children?

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**15. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Would you support legislation to protect Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits from proposed cuts to cost-of-living adjustments, time limits, and sanctions?

27	28	29	30
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**16. Social Services & Safety Net Funding:** Do you support increasing funding by \$4.4 million over FY26 levels to the Office of Victim Services and Justice Grants and the Department of Human Services to expand domestic violence survivor services, including targeted support for underserved communities, primary prevention programming, and flexible cash assistance for survivors?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 5 of 6) to Candidates for **WARD 6**

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

27. GLORIA ANN NAUDEN (D)  
28. CHARLES ALLEN (D)

29. MICHAEL MURPHY (D)  
30. JORGE RICE (R)

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27	28	29	30
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**18. Housing, Transportation, & Behavioral Health:** Do you support maintaining current funding levels for the School-Based Behavioral Health program in DC public and public charter schools?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

**19. Housing, Transportation, & Behavioral Health:** Do you support expanding the Nuisance Abatement Fund to enable the Department of Buildings to directly repair housing code violations?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

**20. Housing, Transportation & Behavioral Health:** Would you support legislation to create standardized criteria, definitions, and due process protections for any government actions related to encampments?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

# Y/N Questions (set 6 of 6) to Candidates for WARD 6

## CANDIDATES BY NUMBER:

27. GLORIA ANN NAUDEN (D)

28. CHARLES ALLEN (D)

29. MICHAEL MURPHY (D)

30. JORGE RICE (R)

**21. Food Access & Equity:** Would you support legislation to establish a Food First Responders Platform enabling community organizations to respond during food emergencies?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

**22. Food Access & Equity:** Would you support including locally-sourced food procurement requirements in DC government food service contracts?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

**23. Food Access & Equity:** Do you support dedicated local funding for food access infrastructure in communities east of the Anacostia River?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

**24. Food Access & Equity:** Do you support requiring annual public reporting on food access metrics, including food retail density, SNAP utilization, and diet-related health outcomes, disaggregated by ward?

27	28	29	30
-	Y	-	-

## RESPONSE KEY:

Y = YES; N = NO; - = NO RESPONSE PROVIDED

## Explanations to Y/N Questions

**Would you like to elaborate on your answers to any of the Yes/No questions presented?**



Charles  
**Allen (D)**

**28.**

With respect to taxes and raising additional revenue, my position is that any tax increase must be effectively communicated to the public so that the public understands the rationale and purpose of the tax increase. I am not afraid to lead the fight to raise revenue to create a fair city for all our residents, but I do not support increasing taxes solely to raise taxes. The additional revenue should be devoted and used to fund government programming or other important priorities. I have successfully led the Council to pass revenue increases in the past, and they have been specifically tied to important policy priorities. There are still a lot of questions about how much increasing the capital gains tax and imposing a land value tax would generate, but I remain open to supporting these tax proposals if there is a worthwhile policy priority that we need to fund.

**“The right to vote has and always will remain the most powerful non-violent tool we have in a democratic society. We must, each and every one of us, continue to protect this sacred right and ensure everyone is afforded the opportunity to vote.”**

*– John Lewis*



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On June 16, you will be asked to make a choice with your vote in one of the most historic primaries under DC’s Home Rule, and Fair Budget wants to ensure that candidates are focused on building community-centered budgets and policy for DC. We do not want empty promises or campaign talking points that do not ultimately result in real, actionable policies that serve the greater good of our neighbors. We hope this score card will help you navigate this year’s pool of candidates and vote in a way that aligns with our collective vision for an accountable, transparent, and just DC.



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**INFO@FAIRBUDGET.ORG**

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