

Please attach a brief bio in addition to the questionnaire.

A life-long member of the Democratic Party, Jack represented Ward 2 of Washington, DC from May 1991 to January 2020, making him the DC Council's longest-serving lawmaker. Jack also served as the Chairman of the Board of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), having twice served as the primary director from DC on the WMATA board, first from 1993 to 1999 and again from 2015 through 2019. He has served as chairman of the board three times (1994, 1997, and 2016).

Jack was born in Nanticoke, Pennsylvania, on October 31, 1953, the son of a florist and a school teacher. He received an economics degree with honors (cum laude) from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, in 1975 and a J.D. degree from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law in 1978. He began practicing law in Washington, DC at the Securities and Exchange Commission. Jack was elected to the DC Council in 1991. Jack had previously served as a member of Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2B in Dupont Circle and was elected to serve as chairman of the ANC from 1989 to 1990.

On the DC Council, Jack served as chairman of the Council's Committee on Finance and Revenue from 2001 through 2019. During Jack's tenure on the Council, he has served on many committees, including the Committee on Business and Economic Development, the Committee on Government Operations and the Committee on Transportation and the Environment. Jack was a delegate at every Democratic National Convention from 1992 to 2016, as well as DC Co-Chair of the 2004 Howard Dean presidential campaign, the 1992 and 1996 Bill Clinton presidential campaigns, the 2012 Barack Obama presidential campaign and the 2008 and 2016 Hillary Clinton presidential campaigns. He was a Presidential Elector representing DC in 1992, 2004, and 2016. Jack also served as treasurer of the DC Democratic Party from 1988 to 1991, Board Chair for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments in 1995, and was elected Democratic National Committeeman for DC on the Democratic National Committee in 2018.

Jack married Noel Soderberg in 1994. The couple had three children together - triplets, Katherine, Christine and John. Noel died in September 2003. Jack is a member of the Christ Church in Georgetown and the Foundry United Methodist Church in Dupont Circle.

Introductory Questions

1. What office are you seeking, and why did you decide to run for that office? If (re) elected, what are your priority areas of focus?

Ward 2 and the city will face an economic crisis over the coming years. Residents are out of work, businesses are closing, and children aren't receiving teacher led education. We need leaders who have been tested in the face of a crisis, who know how to bring realistic, thoughtful policies to the table all while ensuring that residents can still depend on services when they need them. I'm running to represent Ward 2 on the Council because we need a tested leader who has produced results and can produce results on day one, not someone who needs on the job training.

We have accomplished a great deal in the last several years. I'd like to continue serving and using my experience to make Ward 2 and the city the world class destination I know it can be.

I am very proud of the contributions and accomplishments I have made as the Ward 2 Councilmember. I am proud that DC was awarded a Triple AAA bond rating, the highest possible rating, putting the city on firm financial footing for the first time. I am equally proud of the role I have played in making Washington D.C. a world class city. I led the effort to build the Washington Convention Center, Capital One Arena, Nationals Park – home to our World Series Champion, and our newest addition, Audi Field.

I have always said that our residents who have lived here during the bad times should be able to stay during the good times.

Many long-time residents of Washington DC - and the city's success may have affected their home value and taxes. I have consistently fought to keep the 10% cap on the assessment of primary residences so that long-time residents can afford to stay in the home they may have owned for many years.

I'm proud to have been and, continue to be, an advocate and a champion in the LGBTQ community's quest toward unequivocal full equality, championing equal

rights for the LGBTQ community when most elected officials were afraid to do so. I'm proud of having been on the frontline throughout the early years of the AIDS epidemic securing funding for treatment, prevention programs, and research, while providing comfort to those struck down by the disease. I want to continue to improve access to education and improve our schools; create jobs and strengthen workforce development; address affordable housing and, remedy our concerning homeless situation.

I want to continue to grow and develop our city and establish DC as the best city in the nation for each and every resident to live, learn and grow.

Budget

2. Do you consider the District's total current budget to be too large, too small, or about right? Please explain.

At this moment, the District's budget is too large. The economic impact of the Coronavirus will force the Council and the Mayor to cut the budget by roughly \$1 billion in FY2021. Cutting from the budget will be unpopular and difficult, but necessary because the city needs to refill its reserves within two years by law.

3. With unemployment, homelessness, and general economic distress at high levels, do you envision increasing safety net spending in future budgets? If so, which areas would you seek to expand?

The Council and the Mayor will have to balance cuts with putting programs in place for residents who need assistance. The immediate need for many, right now, aside from health care, is to keep their homes and their jobs. I'm in favor of suspending rent payments and evictions for middle and low-income residents, as well as providing grants to small businesses to stay open and pay employees. We need to weather this pandemic and making sure we have basic protections for our residents is a step towards ensuring their security.

4. With the COVID-19 outbreak causing an economic downturn and stress

on state and local budgets, would you support raising taxes to maintain current spending levels? If so, how should new revenue sources be targeted?

The Coronavirus crisis will create at least a \$1 billion shortfall between now and the end of the fiscal year on September 30th. Of the taxes collected, the city will lose nearly \$700 million in sales taxes this year alone. We will also lose another \$300 million from property taxes and income taxes.

Raising taxes to attempt to cover the \$1 billion loss in this environment would be a real mistake and make life only more difficult for residents trying to make ends meet. We could be reeling from the effects of this pandemic for months instead of weeks and still not fully recover for years.

The FY2021 budget must be at least \$1 billion less than our current budget, and that may be a best-case scenario. Any reductions in spending will be difficult, painful, and absolutely necessary to balance our budget. As a city we will all face tough decisions over at least the next two to five years and the wellbeing of every person is at stake.

District leaders will need to go back to the drawing board on the FY 2021 budget and draft it like they are preparing for the worst to happen. They will need to start with the FY2020 as a baseline and reduce spending by approximately \$1 billion.

Transportation, Housing and Infrastructure

5. More than a third of DC residents do not own cars and automobile traffic significantly contributes to climate change. If elected, how will you work to improve public transportation in the District?

Public transportation needs to be treated as a necessity, similar to the fire department and public libraries, not a luxury for those who can afford to ride. Metro should be safe, affordable, reliable, and accessible for every person who depends on a bus or train to get to where they're going.

As Chair of Metro for more than five years, I made tough decisions to fix a broken system. Together with Metro leadership, we made sure Metro focused on fixing the most dangerous sections of the rail system while addressing the need to

bring riders back by making trains more reliable, decreasing headways, and improving on time performance.

At a moment when Metro needed resources to fix the rail system, I championed the regional effort to approve dedicated funding. I am proud that for the first time in Metro's history, the system is receiving guaranteed funds and officials who are focused on running a public transportation system don't have to beg regional law makers for money every year. By coming together as a city and region we have made a lot of progress since 2015.

When together we come out on the other end of the Covid-19 pandemic, we need to move forward to make sure everyone can reliably ride safely for little to no cost.

We need to:

- Introduce a flat \$1 fare for every passenger with no rail transfer or bus transfer fees.**
- Reinstate late night service hours for hospitality and late-night economy workers.**
- Make sure Metro is safe and secure for every passenger.**
- Improve health safety for passengers and transportation workers now and in the future.**
- Protect current bus routes that connect neighborhoods and communities who depend on them.**

As a major transportation hub for the District, Maryland and Virginia region, we must invest and build alternative transportation infrastructure. The District is committed to building 20 miles of additional alternative transportation infrastructure by 2022. Not only do we need more bike lanes, but we need to think creatively about how we manage the use of the streets to move more people as efficiently and safely as possible. An important part of alternative transportation modes not only includes ridesharing vehicles but also dock-less bikes, electric bikes, electric scooters, and mopeds. I support advocacy for increased availability of these transportation options in a regulatory environment that protects their affordability and accessibility. I understand that these mobility options offer workers a critical transportation mode that provides safe travel to and from home or as a connection on both ends of bus and rail transit, especially

for late-night staff.

As the Council focuses on the present state of our infrastructure, we must plan for the next 30 years. As Councilmember for Ward 2, I will do everything to make sure our current plans are completed and focus on the next 30 years of transportation infrastructure planning in the District.

We need to:

- **Expand the dedicated bus lane network to build on current and future lanes on 16th Street, K Street, H Street NW, I (Eye) Street NW;**
- **Open our streets up to allow more space for pedestrians to social distance in the midst of the Coronavirus. We can also use this time to explore where open streets make sense after the health crisis ends.**
- **Enforce existing traffic laws to ensure safer streets for everyone. Scooters should not be used on sidewalks – too dangerous. Strict enforcement, although appearing challenging, must be increased. Current regulations and protocols must be enforced in order to secure the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and scooter users.**
- **Work with the Council’s Transportation Committee and DDOT to begin a 30-year outlook on transportation infrastructure through 2050.**

What else would you do to increase pedestrian safety?

As stated above, enforcement of existing traffic laws to ensure safer streets for everyone is critical. Diligent and strict enforcement must be adhered. Current regulations and protocols must be enforced in order to secure the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and scooter users.

6. Other global cities are working to increase nearby access to amenities for all residents. For example, Paris recently announced a plan to become a “15-minute city” with grocery stores and other destinations located within a short walk of every home. What will you do to eliminate food deserts and improve local options throughout the District?

As Councilmember, I worked to bring many grocery stores to Ward 2, such as Whole Foods, into Logan Circle. I was very much involved in securing government approval for the establishment of weekend farmer's markets. While Ward 2 has many places for residents to get groceries and fresh produce, we need to focus on food deserts in other areas of the city.

I have partnered with Councilmember Gray to make it easier for grocery stores to come to Wards 7 and 8. I also worked with him to help establish a hospital east of the river.

7. As of 2019, there were 6,500 people in the District experiencing homelessness and the economic impact of COVID-19 will place a strain on thousands more. How do you plan on decreasing homelessness in a sustainable way?

in addition to enhancing existing programs, I have proposed legislation ensuring permanent supportive housing through Housing First. I've worked with stakeholders such as Washington Interfaith Network, DCAYA, The Way Home and Good Faith Communities Coalition, to develop a fully funded platform to end chronic homelessness.

I worked to establish the Interagency Council on homelessness to coordinate with organizations to identify, track, and offer solutions to end homelessness among populations hit hardest, including veterans. I also passed the "Returning Veteran's Tax Credit," which encourages businesses to hire veterans and championed funding to local organizations housing homeless veterans through the "Southeast Veteran's Access Housing."

The "DC Homelessness Services Reform Act," implements policies to help families in need of housing. I believe in its goal of preventing families from becoming homeless, moving families out of shelters and into housing quickly as possible.

And, although it is estimated roughly that 10% of the population identifies as LGBTQIA, identifying members account for 30% of youth receiving homeless services. That is why I co-sponsored the "LGBTQ Homeless Youth Reform Act,"

to develop policies to reduce the rate of homelessness within the LGBTQIA community.

8. If (re) elected, what will you do to create and protect affordable housing for both home-buyers and renters?

As the former Chair of the Committee on Finance and Revenue, I have a strong record of supporting tax incentives to create affordable housing throughout the District. I was instrumental in creating the Housing Strategy Task Force, which is designed to assess the quality and availability of housing for residents and workers at all income levels. I also introduced legislation to create a “Community Impact Fund,” an offset program that provides support to the District’s social benefit programs and could be utilized by the District to provide new revenue sources for various projects such as affordable housing.

I have a long record of championing many tenant issues and have been endorsed numerous times by DC tenant organizations. I supported the “Permanent Rental Housing Act Protection Amendment,” which would have made rent control permanent throughout the District. I also supported the “Tenants Rights to Information Act,” which would force landlords to disclose the rent, rent ceiling, any pending or completed petitions; any rent surcharges and how often, if any, rent increases may be implemented.

The preservation of affordable rental housing is critical. When that type of affordable housing goes offline it is too rarely replaced. For this reason, support for the Housing Production Trust Fund and tax credits is something I have championed at the Council. I believe both building, but more importantly preserving, affordable housing is one of the key roles of the HPTF. There are buildings throughout the District which have used the Fund to assist in tenant ownership of the building. That is why I created the funding mechanism for the HPTF.

9. Revitalization in DC has created an increase in commercial and residential development. Though this revitalization is beneficial to the District, certain areas are not experiencing it at the same rate as other neighborhoods. What are your plans to ensure that all of DC benefits

from periods of economic growth?

What is often overlooked is that the District possesses an asset that no other large city has and it is a characteristic we must work together to preserve: tourism and hospitality. Not only are 96% of District hospitality establishments locally grown community businesses, these businesses comprise an industry of opportunity for a diverse and dynamic part of our population.

I will continue to support the easing of business taxes and commercial rents to encourage local community small businesses. I have worked for decades on numerous initiatives designed to strengthen neighborhood commercial corridors. I know this to be a vital step to ensure valuable community anchors continue to thrive.

I would insist that any new housing construction in our historic neighborhoods must comply with all DC Historic Preservation Review Board established procedural rules, design standards, design guidelines and compatibility with historic properties. I have worked tirelessly with neighborhood associations in Ward 2, such as, the Logan Circle and Dupont Circle Citizens Associations for decades on many detailed and complicated zoning and regulatory issues related to neighborhood revitalization, so as to ensure that the “creep” of commercial development which threatened the very existence of Logan and Dupont Circle neighborhoods in the 1980s was not continued. While I recognize there are opportunities to create additional housing and business development within several of DC’s neighborhoods and communities, it must be done in a fashion which does not weaken our historic preservation standards.

Job training should continue in the trades that are currently in demand in the city in order to keep up with the service industry needs. Skilled labor trades are always in demand and job training should focus on these professions.

I support additional supplemental funding to the Department of Employment Services that is targeted to community-based organizations that work to help District residents overcome barriers and get their high school diploma or GED and provide job training and job placement assistance, such as the various professional trades programs within the Carlos Rosario International Public

Charter School.

10. Which recently revitalized DC neighborhood would you suggest as the best model for the city as a whole, and why?

Corridors including the 14th Street corridors of Dupont and Logan Circles, the 7th street and U Street corridors of the Shaw neighborhood, the H Street NE corridor, the South Capitol Street and Navy Yard neighborhood and the Southwest Waterfront area, all have their own character, bringing in new businesses, different levels of affordable housing and residences, entertainment and open public spaces and pedestrian amenities.

Educatio n

11. Do you think reform in the DC public schools is headed in the right direction? Explain your answer.

I believe that our public schools represent our city's commitment to helping all children dream their dreams and achieve them. A high-quality public education for all children is an economic necessity, an anchor of democracy, a moral imperative and fundamental civil right, without which none of our rights can be realized fully. As part of this commitment to our public schools, government should uphold enact, and fund policies that fulfill our collective obligations to help all children succeed.

We must continue what works. In 2007, the Public Education Reform Amendment Act (PERAA) established mayoral control of schools, ultimately paving the way for many of the reforms, such as the IMPACT evaluation system and an independent, sole-authorizer of public charter schools, that have charted the current course of progress in our schools. However, some have called for either an end or change to mayoral control and a return to a more empowered role for the elected school board. I support the existing governance structure over education as constructed by the PERAA.

We must correct the existing Inequities. DC has underfunded schools going as far back as the 2013 Adequacy Study by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for

Education but we also know that the schools serving the students with the highest needs have been chronically underfunded for much longer. I believe this is unacceptable and that resources must go to the students and schools that need them most. As a DC Council member, I will propose we do the following:

- Increase the base of the Uniform Per Pupil Student Funding Formula (UPSFF) by at least Increase the “at-risk” weight within the UPSFF to at least 0.37, per the Adequacy Study;
- Increase support for mental health services in schools, especially school-based mental health professionals; and
- Renew and extend the annual 2.2 percent increase in the public charter schools’ facilities allowance.

As we all know, schools are much more than bricks and mortar. As public institutions, schools simultaneously serve as community institutions and centers of learning. That is why I devised a tremendously successful school funding mechanism known as the “School Modernization Act.” Through this program, we have invested millions of dollars per year in school construction and renovation. However, after recent years of improvement, many DCPS schools remain in need of modernization. I will work to ensure that multi-phased school modernization projects are initiated and completed in a timely fashion. I will also ensure adequate funding for the school construction trust fund.

12. How do you suggest that we repurpose school properties that have been closed over the past few years?

I’m a strong proponent and advocate of the arts in DC. Closed school properties can be repurposed as recreation and community centers serving both our youth and senior population. They can be utilized as art spaces, studios and galleries for artists: painters and photography; film and music; dance and theater. They can be utilized as classroom settings for a variety of skill trades learning: information technology, culinary arts, automotive, plumbing, electrical, landscaping.

13. How will you ensure equitable Special Education allocations across the city?

Currently, only 25% of at-risk students attend a 4-star or 5-star school, compared to 58% of non-at-risk students. At the same time, many school leaders are eager to serve more at-risk students in alignment with their mission but current policy prevents it. I support that the My School DC lottery be amended to include a voluntary preference for students designated as “at-risk”.

We must ensure that special need and at-risk students are able to attend 4-star or 5-star schools and that these schools are equipped to handle their needs. It is federal law that students with special needs be educated in the least restrictive environment – with as much exposure as possible to the general curriculum and wide range of peers. We must ensure that all DCPS and public charter teachers have the appropriate special need certification and experience. When special need or at-risk students are given the appropriate tools and services, they are more likely to graduate, and are more likely to succeed in post-secondary opportunities.

14. What accountability measures can you put into place to ensure that schools are staffed appropriately? What significant, unique policies would you put into place that would drastically increase the support and retention of teachers and administrators in DCPS.

Educators daily operate on the proverbial front-lines. Many classrooms are over capacity and teachers are not being given enough resources to meet educational objectives. I will make sure teachers and schools have enough resources to meet both of these needs.

Education is the doorway to opportunity and teachers are the gatekeepers. As such, we must ensure that our teachers are supported, fully equipped, and operate in a supportive climate. I introduced a mandate that every school be equipped with a full-time art teacher, music teacher, physical education teacher and librarian in every public school to make sure schools are well-rounded. I also proposed the “Character Education Implementation Act,” that will infuse our kids with the basic universal values into all aspects of school culture: honesty, hard work, self-respect, concern for others, cooperation, and self-knowledge.

I will work with all appropriate city agencies to ensure our schools are performing at their peak. Although improving, DC schools continue to have an unacceptable low graduation rate. I believe it is essential to educate all students to deeper

levels of learning, one which transcends surface levels of standardized models.

We need to make sure the money we spend on education is used prudently and in the most effective way possible. We must make sure DCPS and public charter schools are fully receiving the funds allocated by legislation and must be held accountable and fully transparent to prevent mismanaged funds and misplaced student allocations.

We must push methodologies and comprehensive metrics which track individuals school improvement, morale, turnover, and graduation rates, that gauge whether students are engaging in higher-order-thinking, problem solving and communications skills.

Criminal Justice

15. Describe one aspect of an effective safety plan that would lower crime rates in DC without infringing on the constitutional rights of DC residents.

I believe that there is no greater priority than the safety and security of our citizens. I have long recognized the unique public safety challenges confronting the Districts communities. The most important street to everyone is the street in front of their home or business.

As Chair of the Committee on Public Safety and the Judiciary (1997-1998), I introduced a myriad of legislation to reverse our city's reputation as the "Murder Capital". Since that time, crime in the District has significantly declined. This was no accident; I passed and endorsed legislation such as the "Omnibus Public Safety Amendment Act" to get prostitution off the streets and supported the creation of Gun and Drug Free Zones.

I will continue to build upon the foundation of my previous work by making public safety a priority. This includes strengthening the Metropolitan Police Department by ensuring they have the resources to successfully do their jobs. I introduced the MPD Minimum Staffing Act, which mandates a minimum police staff of 4,000 officers. It is also important to empower community organizations who are focused on making streets safer and reducing crime, through incentives, grant

awards or tax relief.

I support and will introduce public safety measures that can protect people from gun violence. We must pass sensible gun reforms, stronger gun laws – banning all automatic and semi-automatic weapons, and work to close the loopholes that jeopardize the safety of our families. We must also work in our own city and with business leaders to encourage a culture of responsible gun ownership. We know that gun violence is preventable, and we should be committed to doing what it takes to keep our families safe. I have supported dozens of pieces of legislation in the past three decades which have worked to limit gun proliferation and look to continue working on this.

16. How would improve reentry programs for returning citizens to ensure they are connected to gainful employment, education, and their families?

One of the best ways to improve reentry programs is to return former incarcerated individuals, home to DC as soon as possible. The DC government, working in partnership with the business community could do a much better job of assisting our returning citizens preparing them for reentry into society. Reentry into society should commence in advance, prior to release – preparing them by providing counseling and education, job and skills training and job placement, housing and financial assistance.

Wages and Labor

17. What initiatives would you propose to ensure that minority- and woman-owned business enterprises are able to compete for projects, particularly District construction and development?

The vast majority of employers in the District, are small businesses. It couldn't be more important to ensure the DC's small business owners have the tools that they need in order to continue to support the District, as they always have in the past.

I have been the biggest champion on the council for encouraging growth among small business and business with minority owners, representing the Districts

strong history of diversity. My record includes passing legislation such as the “Equal Opportunity for Local, Small, or Disadvantaged Business Enterprises,” the “Small Business Personal Property Tax Exception Act,” and the “Small Business Commercial Property Tax Relief Act.”

I also supported the “Minority and Women-Owned Business Assessment Act,” which encouraged the growth of migrant business in the District and ensured that immigrants were being treated fairly during the procurement process for government contracts.

The economic growth that is taking place in this city is astonishing. Our challenge is to make sure that everyone in the city is benefitting from that economic growth. I introduced the “DC Business Improvement District Economy Development Act” for the purpose of supporting economic development in traditionally underserved areas.

Government Accountability

18. Do you believe that the current DC Council represents the interests of the broad public? If not, what segments of the public are underrepresented?

Yes, I do. However, I also believe that every Councilmember, as legislators and responsible for ensuring the public welfare for all DC residents, must stay focused on constant and never-ending improvement of agency responsiveness and the accessibility of services and staff to DC residents.

During my tenure as Councilmember, I was a longtime supporter of constant outreach and sustained communication with constituents. For years, I have directed the Ward 2 Council office to post all information online. Once posted, we organized by cluster and agency. We ensured access to information by providing hard copies at libraries and government buildings.

I’m committed to working with stakeholders to improve accessibility, ensure transparency, champion data collecting, and ensure it is used effectively. It is vital to have effective and efficient governmental agencies that are fully equipped to enforce and follow through on policies that serve as essential functions to our residents.

I will ensure agencies are using best practices to deliver resources and spend tax dollars efficiently, effectively, and responsibly. I will work to use the latest technological advances to administer practical solutions such as collaboration reports and tracking budget data.

19. How will you demonstrate accessibility and responsiveness to your constituents?

During my tenure as Ward 2 Councilmember, I personally spent countless hours visiting all of the ANCs, community meetings and neighborhood associations on a regular basis, and as many small businesses as possible. I maintained an on-going and robust dialogue with the myriad of individual owners, managers, and employees and the concerns and challenges that Ward 2 encompasses. For 29 years, I had the most effective constituent services outreach team and I commit to continue and build on this active record of outreach.

As a core component of the approach I have long taken, it is imperative that knowledge and experience must be sought and incorporated in developing public policy. Throughout my extensive engagement with the ANCs, community and neighborhood associations and businesses, I learned to respect and appreciate the voices of the community.

Along with DC Council colleagues and all District residents, I witnessed firsthand the articulate concern and passionate commitment to building a better and more equitable city; and, that our city will be better for making these voices a part of determining how our city can be a place that better serves all its residents.

20. This is the first campaign cycle conducted with the Fair Elections Program, which provides public financing for candidates who adhere to small-dollar contribution limits. Do you believe that a candidate who is not participating in this program can adequately represent the views of all residents of the District?

I have personally chosen to participate in the Fair Elections Program, using public financing which means I will not be taking any financial contribution from

corporations.

Yes, I do believe that a candidate who is not participating in the Fair Elections Program can adequately represent the views of all residents of the District.

21. Other suggested campaign reforms include ranked-choice voting and lowering the voting age to 16. What changes would you support to ensure that our elections truly represent the will of the people?

The DC Council had considered legislation that would allow 16- and 17-year-olds in DC to vote in all elections, including the 2020 presidential election, but they tabled the bill indefinitely after losing support from council members.

A recent poll by WJLA the ABC affiliate in DC, found just 18% support for a proposed bill to lower the voting age to 16 in the District of Columbia, compared to 77% against. The local NBC news affiliate ran a similar poll online in which 83% of participants were against the bill.

Although some experts say that 16- and 17-year olds demonstrate lower interests in politics, have less political knowledge, and lack the experience needed to participate in elections, I know that there are several exceptions to that belief. One only has to look at the number of young people – 16 and 17-year olds that are very active and intimately involved in the anti-violence, environmental, gun laws reform and safety and social justice and reform movements.

I do not think that rank choice voting will promote legislative moderation or new campaign tactics, because it usually produces outcomes similar to what one would expect from a standard plurality system. If there's something wrong with plurality vote primaries, find a way to get more people to vote. But don't manipulate their voting.

If we want decisions guaranteed to be made by a majority, then a runoff is a better idea, because it allows voters to make a clear choice. In addition, some say there may be value in having an actual final round of campaigning between two candidates. That way, voters can see the top two finishers directly battling each other for public support.

Ballot initiatives can be great grassroots ideas and fair changes to policies and

law. They can also be misguided and cause more harm than help residents. There is a time and place for policies to be changed by ballot initiative. I was in favor of the ballot initiative to legalize marijuana in the District, but I was against Initiative 77.

There are current guidelines for ballot initiatives to be taken up by voters directly and I believe those are sufficient guidelines. However, the Council has the power to create law as well as the ability to repeal ballot initiatives. Every issue has nuance in the substance of the policy or policies being changed or created. Rarely is any issue seen as a pure “good” or “bad” decision.

Ward-Specific Questions

22. (Ward 2 Candidates Only) Will you commit to supporting the winner of the Democratic primary in the June 16 special election and/or the general election in November? Why or why not?

Absolutely, yes.

I believe the constituents of Ward 2 should decide their representation – a right they were recently denied.

23. (Ward 4 Candidates Only) Councilmembers often have to strike a balance between supporting the mayor’s priorities and providing independent representation for their constituents. How does your vision for Ward 4 differ from Mayor Bowser?

24. (Ward 7 Candidates Only) Do you support extending the streetcar on H Street east to Benning Road Metro? How would you work to ensure that projects like this provide connections with the rest of the city while limiting displacement among current Ward 7 residents?

25. (Ward 8 Candidates Only) Given Ward 8 still exists within a food

desert, with a lack of healthcare facilities, what are your plans to bring sustainable services and retail partners to the community moving forward?