



Building on Victory

A 2016 ELECTION GUIDE TO LGBT
ISSUES IN WASHINGTON, D.C.



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Principal Author and Editor: Richard J. Rosendall

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P.O. Box 75265

Washington, D.C. 20013

equal@glaa.org

www.glaa.org

www.glaaforum.org

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1. ACTION ITEM HIGHLIGHT LIST

D.C.'s LGBT community has made great progress. Here are six major areas that need improvement.

Home Rule	Oppose congressionally mandated school vouchers.
Public Health	Issue the long-delayed LGBT Health Report, and mandate LGBT data collection across all programs.
	Target funds to address LGBT health disparities in mental health and substance abuse treatment.
	Build on recent progress to improve transgender healthcare access.
	Reinvigorate HIV prevention efforts including with PrEP, PEP, and increased condom distribution.
	Separate Emergency Medical Services from the Fire Department.
Judiciary and Public Safety	Pass Bill 21-38, the Death with Dignity Act.
	Develop a multi-agency/service provider strategy to reduce hate crimes.
	Improve data collection and reporting on LGBT-related hate crimes and intimate partner violence.
	'Jobs Not Jails': Develop alternatives to incarceration for marginalized citizens who resort to sex work for survival.
	Reintroduce and pass the Police Monitoring Enhancement Amendment Act.
Human Rights	Pass legislation barring survival and non-violent crime related offenses [i.e. sex work and drug possession] from being considered in employment applications.
Youth and Seniors	Increase funding for transitional housing for homeless LGBT youth and seniors.
	Mandate LGBT data collection across all DC-funded programs (particularly DHS, DOH, DBH, Housing, Aging, Youth) so that needs can be measured; specific programs developed; and culturally competent contact persons identified.
	Pass Bill 21-361, the Youth Suicide Prevention and School Climate Survey Act of 2015.
Consumers and Businesses	Defend the right of consumers to choose adult entertainment and of appropriately licensed businesses to provide it.

2. HOME RULE

2.1 Opposing Congressionally Mandated School Vouchers

We agree with the D.C. Council members, a majority, who wrote in October 2015 to Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT), Chair of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, opposing the congressional imposition of private school vouchers on the District. Councilmember David Grosso (D-At Large), Chair of the D.C. Council Committee on Education, said in a statement upon issuing the letter:

[A]n evaluation of the voucher program¹ found that the voucher program did not improve students' academic achievement. As a city dedicated to human rights, it is also disturbing that over 80% of the students with vouchers attend schools that operate outside the non-discrimination provisions of the D.C. Human Rights Act.

It is past time for Congress to stop treating D.C. as a petri dish for members' ideas and let the elected members of the D.C. Council and the Mayor do what D.C. residents voted for us to do--govern ourselves.²

In May 2015, GLAA joined in a similar letter to Chaffetz and Ranking Member Rep. Elijah Cummings (D-MD), co-signed by ACLU of the Nation's Capital; the Anti-Defamation League of the Washington, DC Region; DC Vote; Jews United for Justice; National Organization for Women, DC Chapter; and the Washington Teachers' Union. The letter said in part:

Our organizations represent a diverse cross section of the residents of Washington, DC, with a wide variety of interests and concerns. We are united, however, in opposing this voucher program, which was imposed upon us by a Congress in which we have no voting representation. Some of the undersigned groups oppose the DC voucher because the program is ineffective and lacks accountability; others because the program offends the notion of home rule; and still others because the program allows private schools to receive federal funds and educate our students while they maintain exemptions from federal and District of Columbia civil rights protections.³

Now Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) and Rep. Mark Meadows (R-NC) have introduced legislation that would force the District to use local taxpayer money to fund a voucher program that the District does not want.⁴

Thanks to Councilmembers Grosso, Alexander, Allen, Bonds, Evans, May, Nadeau, and Silverman for signing the October letter to Chaffetz. As of this writing, they are being pressured to back down. We urge them to stand their ground. We urge their colleagues, Council candidates, and other District officials to join them and us in resisting congressional interference in our self-governance.

¹ "Evaluation of the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program: Final Report," Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, June 2010, <http://tinyurl.com/coo2k2s>

² "Grosso and Colleagues Call on Congress to Let D.C. Decide Local Education Policy," October 8, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/owssnao>

³ "Organizations that Represent DC Oppose the DC Private School Voucher," DC-based organizations, May 13, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/pb4ugog>

⁴ "Cruz wants to force D.C. to fund a school voucher program it doesn't want," Perry Stein, *The Washington Post*, February 5, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/zmnw5hw>

3. PUBLIC HEALTH

3.1 LGBT Health Report

The Office of LGBTQ Affairs is supposed to work with the Dept. of Health to issue an annual LGBT health report. This was last done in 2010. David Mariner of The DC Center notes that a report can be created "by analyzing data DC already has from YRBS, BRFSS,⁵ NHBS."^{6, 7, 8} It is needed to address LGBT health disparities.⁹ This delinquency must end. The District should then distribute intercity funds as grants to LGBT health organizations.

3.2 Transgender Health

Transgender people are disproportionately poor, and survival sex work is a serious HIV transmission vector. Discrimination limits their access and willingness to seek medical care.¹⁰ The executive action in 2014 to mandate trans-inclusive healthcare coverage was a key step,¹¹ but more must be done to ensure qualified and culturally competent providers.¹² We thank Yvette Alexander, Chair of the Health Committee, for passing the LGBTQ Cultural Competency Continuing Education Amendment Act of 2015.¹³

3.3 Mental Health

The District needs LGBT-targeted programs for suicide prevention. The same goes for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), which is more prevalent in LGB young adults.¹⁴

3.4 HIV and AIDS

We embrace the updated National HIV/AIDS Strategy and its priority activities thru 2020:

- **"Widespread HIV testing and linkage to care**, enabling people living with HIV to access treatment early."
- **"Broad support for people living with HIV to remain engaged in comprehensive care**, including support for treatment adherence."
- **"Universal viral suppression** among people living with HIV, since it benefits their health and reduces transmission of the virus to others."
- **"Full access to comprehensive pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) services** for those whom it is appropriate and desired, with support for medication adherence for those using PrEP. As one of the tools in the HIV prevention toolkit, PrEP is a way for people who don't have HIV to prevent HIV infection by taking a pill every day."¹⁵

⁵ Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <http://www.cdc.gov/brfss/>

⁶ Tweet, David Mariner, The DC Center, February 19, 2016, <https://twitter.com/TheDCCenter/status/700734610251063296>

⁷ Tweet, David Mariner, The DC Center, February 19, 2016, <https://twitter.com/TheDCCenter/status/700733107692027908>

⁸ Tweet, David Mariner, The DC Center, February 19, 2016, <https://twitter.com/fighthivindc/status/700729123933724672>

⁹ "How to Close the LGBT Health Disparities Gap," National Network to Eliminate Disparities in Behavioral Health, September 18, 2013, <http://tinyurl.com/o95q7a3>

¹⁰ Reports and Research, DC Trans Coalition, <http://tinyurl.com/2wuy7lv>

¹¹ "DC Introduces Comprehensive Health Care Coverage For Transgender People," Andrew Cray, *ThinkProgress*, February 27, 2014, <http://tinyurl.com/j2o42ec>

¹² "Coverage is Not Enough: Working for Comprehensive Transgender Healthcare," Human Rights Campaign, April 27, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/hqmmgmg>

¹³ LGBTQ Cultural Competency Continuing Education Amendment Act of 2015, Act A21-0316, <http://tinyurl.com/jfkekxl>

¹⁴ "Higher risk of PTSD for gay, lesbian, bisexual, 'mostly heterosexual' youth," *Harvard Gazette*, June 19, 2012, <http://tinyurl.com/jmaycmn>

¹⁵ "Fact Sheet: The National HIV/AIDS Strategy: Updated to 2020," The White House, July 30, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/p44225n>

The DC Appleseed Center in 2005 reported many problems at what is now the HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD and TB Administration (HAHSTA). Several of its recommendations were implemented, including reform of the handling of epidemiologic data; a citywide HIV testing campaign; and a citywide condom distribution program. More work is needed in monitoring and evaluations; developing a plan to enhance HIV/AIDS policy for public education; increasing availability of substance use treatment; improving health outcomes; and increasing availability of housing support for people living with HIV/AIDS.^{16, 17}

HAHSTA's HIV prevention measures should include programs targeting overlooked populations such as seniors, the deaf and hard of hearing, immigrants and transgender people; continuation of the Needle Exchange Program;^{18, 19, 20} and opposition to criminal penalties for HIV transmission, which drive unsafe activity underground. Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) should be provided as appropriate at all D.C. healthcare facilities.

DOH should obtain a Ryan White 75/25 waiver to make more funds available for support services,²¹ and should initiate a more accountable fee-for-service funding mechanism. Local funding is needed for non-medical support providers and other, non-Ryan-White-eligible programs (like vocational services). There is a growing need for geriatric services.²² With federal funds dwindling, the District must shepherd its HIV/AIDS resources smartly.²³

3.5 Separating EMS from the Fire Department

It is time to separate Emergency Medical Services from Fire and EMS. This is clear after the resignation of FEMS Medical Director Juliette Saussy,²⁴ and a recent D.C. Council hearing.²⁵ We agree with Don Blanchon, Executive Director of Whitman-Walker Health:

- "Too many residents and their families have suffered from a second-tier EMS service. The result of such service DC has led to unnecessary deaths. This is unacceptable."
- "These two significant elements of public safety are in fact very different service delivery models and require a specific type of leadership and accountability."
- "Separating EMS from DC Fire Dept. would reinforce a core mission and single point of accountability for overall responsiveness to medical emergencies in our community."²⁶

Separating EMS from Fire would also allow a better focus on developing LGBT cultural competency, particularly for psychiatric and substance abuse emergencies.

¹⁶ HIV/AIDS, DC Appleseed Center, <http://tinyurl.com/hp493a9>

¹⁷ "HIV/AIDS in the Nation's Capital," Report Card No. 9, Nov. 2013 to Nov. 2014, DC Appleseed Center, <http://tinyurl.com/hsx3f59>

¹⁸ Policies and Procedures Manual, District of Columbia Needle Exchange Programs, D.C. Department of Health, May 2009, <http://tinyurl.com/aqk5xsz>

¹⁹ "Evidence-Based Findings on the Efficacy of Syringe Exchange Programs: An Analysis of the Scientific Research Completed Since April 1998," David Satcher, MD, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, March 17, 2000, <http://tinyurl.com/bchoikq>

²⁰ "HAHSTA Annual Report 2014," D.C. Department of Health, P. 27, <http://tinyurl.com/z4xyihg>

²¹ "Increasing Flexibility for Ryan White Grantees Making 75/25 Core Medical Services Waiver Requests," Laura W. Cheever, MD, ScM, HIV/AIDS Bureau, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, June 12, 2013, <http://tinyurl.com/z8q9ktv>

²² "Interim HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report: Preliminary 2014 Data," HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD and TB Administration, February 2, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/h6m34j6>

²³ "The Cost of Living, Part 2," Morgan Baskin, *Washington City Paper*, March 4, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/grba9s8>

²⁴ Letter of resignation from FEMS, Juliette Saussy, January 29, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/hxl4326>

²⁵ "FEMS Department Faces Heavy Criticism at D.C. Council Hearing," Andrew Giambone, *Washington City Paper*, February 17, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/gnjxyce>

²⁶ Private email from Don Blanchon, February 20, 2016; used with permission.

4. JUDICIARY AND PUBLIC SAFETY

4.1 Death with Dignity

We support the Death with Dignity Act of 2015, Bill 21-38, introduced by Councilmember Mary Cheh.²⁷ This bill is modeled on an Oregon law. As described by *The Washington Post*, it "would allow patients with illnesses likely to result in death within six months to seek medication to end their lives. Two physicians would have to consent to dispensing the life-ending drugs after certifying the patient's terminal prognosis and mental competency."²⁸ The gay community's painful experience with AIDS gives us sensitivity to end-of-life issues.²⁹ Contrary to opponents such as Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl, this carefully crafted measure is not based on a "eugenic philosophy" but on compassion and respect. Health Committee Chair Yvette Alexander held hearings on the bill in 2015;³⁰ we urge her to mark it up without further delay. If the Health Committee refuses to advance Bill 21-38 this year, a new chair should make such action a priority in 2017.

4.2 LGBT Liaison Unit and Police Response to Hate Crimes

The Metropolitan Police Department's recently renamed Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Liaison Unit (LGBTLU)³¹ was established in 2000 as the first such unit in the country to combine community relations with full policing powers. Alas, it has seen an attrition of its core officers and the ending of its midnight shift.³² The officers who remain are often redeployed.³³ The fact that the unit now has a more inclusive name is little comfort. We continue to support a GLLU presence in all patrol districts, which does not eliminate the need for a robust core unit with seven officers and a full-time sergeant.

The District should develop a comprehensive multi-agency/service provider strategy to reduce hate crimes. MPD must ensure that its gathering and analysis of crime statistics is comprehensive and objective and includes data on LGBT-related hate crimes and intimate partner violence.

We congratulate Sgt. Matthew Mahl, 11-year MPD veteran and former supervisor of what was then the GLLU, on his election as chairman of the Labor Committee of the Fraternal Order of Police, and thank him for his eagerness to work constructively with Police Chief Cathy Lanier.³⁴

4.3 Intimate Partner Violence

Intimate partner violence occurs in an estimated 25% - 33% of LGBT relationships, the same as in heterosexual relationships.³⁵ Statistically, this means there are an estimated 10,000 LGBT survivors in the District. Based on reported information, over 75% of all GLLU

²⁷ Death with Dignity Act of 2015, Bill 21-38, <http://tinyurl.com/l7m8lov>

²⁸ "Death With Dignity' laws are proposed, bringing national debate to D.C. and Md.," Mike DeBonis, *The Washington Post*, January 16, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/ne3tekv>

²⁹ "Summoning the Ancestors," Richard J. Rosendall, *Washington Blade*, November 6, 2014, <http://tinyurl.com/n5pozgn>

³⁰ Testimony on Death with Dignity Act, Bill 21-38, Richard J. Rosendall, Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance, July 10, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/hrfa3xd>

³¹ "Chief changes name of D.C. police gay liaison unit," Lou Chibbaro Jr., *Washington Blade*, January 6, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/ze6r4zu>

³² "Police LGBT liaison unit ends midnight shift," Lou Chibbaro Jr., *Washington Blade*, January 13, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/z8m2wq9>

³³ "Where are Gay and Lesbian Liaison Unit officers? Redeployed." Rick Rosendall, *GLAA Forum*, September 25, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/jjhv8ad>

³⁴ "Gay cop elected head of D.C. police union," Lou Chibbaro Jr., *Washington Blade*, January 18, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/zuccgfe>

³⁵ "Domestic Violence in the LGBT Community," Center for American Progress, June 14, 2011, <http://tinyurl.com/pl7xnk5>

cases involve intimate partner violence. Yet data on such incidents is not consistently collected. Without this data, we do not know the true prevalence of these crimes.

LGBT survivors of intimate partner violence face many barriers to accessing services. We must educate first responders and service providers to the unique dynamics of LGBT domestic violence and aggressively advocate for resources to support survivors. Rainbow Response Coalition in collaboration with other local LGBT groups developed and delivers trainings to MPD and Court Services and Offender Supervision Agency (CSOSA). The entire MPD force should be culturally competent to handle cases of LGBT partner violence.

4.4 'Jobs Not Jails' for Sex Workers

People involved in sex work, including homeless LGBT teens and transgender people, often resort to it for survival. They face greater risk of substance abuse, mental and physical abuse, and sexually transmitted diseases. The District has seen numerous murders of sex workers in recent years, many of which have gone unsolved.

Harassing, arresting, and prosecuting people for survival sex only add to their problems while resolving nothing.³⁶ We believe the District should pursue the more compassionate course of decriminalization and regulation. Short of that, the District can adopt safer, healthier, and more sustainable alternatives to incarceration by providing drop-in centers, transitional housing, job training and placement, counseling, addiction recovery programs, mental health services, and STD testing and treatment for at-risk populations.

4.5 MPD Training, Discipline, and Reform

Early in 2015, GLAA joined allied groups in reviewing MPD diversity training materials on LGBT issues, including the proper handling of hate crimes and intimate partner violence. The materials include a particular focus on transgender issues. This grew out of the "Community Response to the Hate Crimes Assessment Task Force," issued in March 2014, in which GLAA took part.³⁷ We appreciate MPD's cooperation. After the training, MPD must comply with its own orders. Only adverse consequences for officers who fail to enforce rules on hate crimes and interactions with LGBT people will send a credible message that bias on the force will not be tolerated. MPD must avoid having to rehire dismissed officers due to its failure to meet procedural deadlines.³⁸

In March 2015, seven D.C. groups, including GLAA, jointly issued a "Report Card: Status of Metropolitan Police Department Implementation of Recommendations from the Hate Crimes Assessment Task Force and Community Response." As the Report Card noted:

The HCATF report highlighted serious problems in the functioning and effectiveness of the Gay and Lesbian Liaison Unit (GLLU) and Affiliate Liaison program, a growing lack of trust in the police among transgender residents and the broader LGBTQ communities, the absence of a comprehensive, standardized training curriculum on LGBTQ hate crimes and cultural competency, the ineffectiveness of the Critical Incident Team (CIT), and several other issues requiring departmental action. In

³⁶ "Move Along: Policing Sex Work in Washington D.C.," Alliance for a Safe and Diverse DC, May 1, 2008, <http://tinyurl.com/85k5w9y>

³⁷ "Community Response to the Hate Crimes Assessment Task Force," March 13, 2014, <http://tinyurl.com/qapis68>

³⁸ "17 Officers Fired for Misconduct Reinstated," *The Washington Post*, May 20, 2008, <http://tinyurl.com/23m98gc>

addition to these, the community coalition identified other outstanding issues not mentioned in the report but central to LGBTQ communities' relationship with MPD and included recommendations for action. These included both elaboration on matters included in the report and issues not addressed such as LGBT intimate-partner violence (IPV), interactions with LGBTQ youth, and interactions with sex workers.³⁹

As our community continues to engage MPD, GLAA thanks our allies, including Casa Ruby,⁴⁰ the D.C. Anti-Violence Project (formerly GLOV),⁴¹ The DC Center for the LGBT Community,⁴² DC Trans Coalition (DCTC),⁴³ HIPS,⁴⁴ Rainbow Response Coalition (RRC),⁴⁵ and Supporting and Mentoring Youth Advocates and Leaders (SMYAL).⁴⁶

4.6 Treatment of Transgender People by Police, Court, and Corrections

Chief Lanier issued a revised General Order in January 2015 to ensure professional and respectful police interaction with transgender people.⁴⁷ This came after incidents that showed a continuing problem since she first issued the General Order in 2007.^{48, 49} We thank the Chief for this action, and urge continued monitoring of compliance.

Transgender inmates housed by the Department of Corrections have faced discrimination including denial of appropriate housing and healthcare, sexual assault, abusive strip searches, and protective custody that punished the victim.^{50, 51} DOC revised its policy on classifying and housing transgender inmates in 2009.⁵² Efforts by DOC's Transgender Advisory Committee in 2013 led to updated procedures for transgender shaving services.⁵³

4.7 Office of the U.S. Attorney

The Office of the U.S. Attorney prosecutes crimes in the District but is not accountable to District officials. The U.S. Attorney has failed to provide reports to MPD or other District officials on cases, including anti-LGBT hate crimes that it declines to prosecute. The same concern applies to information on other aspects of prosecution. Greater transparency could be provided while preserving confidentiality. District officials must press the U.S. Department of Justice to end this denial of public safety information.

³⁹ "Report Card: Status of Metropolitan Police Department Implementation of Recommendations from the Hate Crimes Assessment Task Force and Community Response," Seven D.C. organizations, March 9, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/zq58yha>

⁴⁰ Casa Ruby, <http://www.casaruby.org>

⁴¹ DC Anti-Violence Project, <http://www.dcapv.org>

⁴² The DC Center for the LGBT Community, <http://www.thedccenter.org>

⁴³ Police training materials, DC Trans Coalition, <http://tinyurl.com/chq56gu>

⁴⁴ HIPS, <http://www.hips.org>

⁴⁵ Rainbow Response Coalition, <http://www.rainbowresponse.org/>

⁴⁶ Supporting and Mentoring Youth Advocates and Leaders (SMYAL), <http://www.smyal.org/>

⁴⁷ MPD General Order 501.02, "Handling Interactions with Transgender Individuals," January 5, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/p9nrwdo>

⁴⁸ "D.C. police struggle over disclosure of transgender murder," Lou Chibbaro Jr., *Washington Blade*, July 21, 2011, <http://tinyurl.com/3vd67o5>

⁴⁹ "Sentencing of MPD Officer Furr Devalues Trans Lives," DC Trans Coalition, January 10, 2013, <http://wp.me/pxSsl-qL>

⁵⁰ "Jails," DC Trans Coalition, <http://tinyurl.com/73x5xan>

⁵¹ "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Offenders," National Institute of Corrections, <http://nicic.gov/lgbti>

⁵² Program Statement on Gender Classification and Housing, D.C. Department of Corrections, February 20, 2009, <http://tinyurl.com/bqlm4ee>

⁵³ "Activists Applaud DOC: Amended policy allows shaving exception for transgender inmates at D.C. Jail," John Riley, *Metro Weekly*, November 12, 2013, <http://tinyurl.com/gwvh7ew>

4.8 Office of Police Complaints

The independent Office of Police Complaints (OPC) employs the best practices of citizen oversight of law enforcement. OPC leadership and staff have shown expertise, integrity, and a commitment to fairness for all. Executive Director Michael G. Tobin reports:

Over the past year, the OPC received more inquiries about filing a police misconduct complaint than any year since the agency began operations in 2001.... We greatly expanded our outreach with the creation of our community partner program. We resolved more cases through mediation than any previous year. We eliminated a backlog of citizen complaints by improving our investigation procedures. We significantly reduced the average time to complete an investigation, and by the end of the year, we logged the fewest investigations remaining open than any year since the agency first opened ... despite ... an increased number of complaints. And, we are on track to surpass all of our agency performance benchmarks in [2016].⁵⁴

OPC should be strengthened in its power to investigate systemic issues. In this regard, GLAA testified in 2014 in support of the Police Monitoring Enhancement Amendment Act of 2013.⁵⁵ Police Chief Cathy Lanier hyperbolically claimed that the bill would endanger the public safety. This made no sense, since she stated that MPD had provided OPC with the information it requested. That being the case, OPC should be entitled by statute to unfettered access to the MPD data it needs to do its job. Its access should not be subject to the whim of a police chief. The Council should re-introduce and pass the bill.

4.9 Combating Violence Against Reproductive-Health Clinics

GLAA has long supported reproductive choice,^{56, 57} as does District law.⁵⁸ We therefore joined NARAL Pro-Choice America and scores of other groups and health professionals in a November 2015 letter to U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch urging her to treat attacks on reproductive-health clinics as acts of domestic terrorism. The letter states in part:

These recent attacks on clinics are part of a long history of ideologically driven clinic violence. Anti-choice individuals and organizations who target abortion providers seek to end reproductive freedom by any means necessary.... We acknowledge and appreciate the long-standing work of the DOJ to investigate and bring an end to clinic violence. To further that goal, we call on the Department of Justice to investigate these attacks under all applicable federal law. These crimes are acts of domestic terrorism under Title 18 of the United States Code, Section 2331, which defines domestic terrorism as dangerous acts "intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population" and "to influence policy of a government by intimidation or coercion." These attacks should also continue to be investigated under the FACE Act, 18 USC Section 248, the federal stalking statute, 18 USC Section 2261A(1), and RICO.⁵⁹

⁵⁴ "Annual Report 2015," Michael G. Tobin, D.C. Office of Police Complaints, January 13, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/hce3tff>

⁵⁵ Testimony on Police Monitoring Enhancement Amendment Act of 2013, Bill 20-63, Richard J. Rosendall, Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance, July 2, 2014, <http://tinyurl.com/kwmzosm>

⁵⁶ "Letter to Congress: DC's local government should decide local laws," *Fund Abortion Now*, July 3, 2013, <http://tinyurl.com/jxo8sas>

⁵⁷ Joint letter thanking Reid, Pelosi for opposing use of religion to discriminate, February 27, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/zqdfnyv>

⁵⁸ "Eleanor Holmes Norton Dares House GOP to Overturn New D.C. Law: 'Go Ahead,'" Emily Crockett, *RH Reality Check*, June 24, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/h938ykr>

⁵⁹ Joint letter to Attorney General Loretta E. Lynch on clinic violence, November 25, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/zksv9sf>

5. HUMAN RIGHTS

5.1 Combating Transgender Discrimination

A gap exists between our model human rights law and reality for trans people. In November 2015, the DC Trans Coalition issued its DC Trans Needs Assessment Report.⁶⁰ It found:

- Workplace harassment is commonplace across all groups.
- Education is little protection against unemployment for trans people.
- Employment discrimination has forced many trans people into the grey economy.
- Trans people seeking vital services are not safe.
- 60% had considered suicide at some point in their lives, 34% had attempted suicide, and 10% had done so in the past 12 months due to the persistent structural violence faced by trans people in DC.

We urge District officials to follow the data and heed the report's recommendations.

5.2 Increasing Transgender Employment

The D.C. Office of Human Rights conducted a six-month study in 2015 that revealed anti-transgender job bias in 48 percent of District employers.⁶¹

The DC Trans Needs Assessment Report states:

A lack of access to education, to the formal economy and the impacts of structural racism, sexism and transphobia all work to produce immense economic inequality and poverty for trans communities in Washington, DC. Issues of harassment in the workplace and schools, as well as a lack of access to higher education, impact one's ability to access formal employment that also, importantly, pays a living wage. Hiring discrimination and workplace harassment are additional barriers for trans persons seeking employment.⁶²

One of the report's proposals is to "Introduce legislation that prevents survival and non-violent crime related offenses [i.e. sex work and drug possession] from being considered in employment applications."⁶³ We agree. As one of the most progressive jurisdictions in the nation, and notwithstanding congressional meddling, it is time for the District to reform policies that are driven by irrational and counterproductive taboos.

Another resource is the Transgender Economic Empowerment Initiative in San Francisco.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ "Access Denied: Washington, DC Trans Needs Assessment Report," November 13, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/h8fvlijm>

⁶¹ "Qualified and Transgender: A report on results of resume testing for employment discrimination based on gender identity." D.C. Office of Human Rights, November 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/zfe7rzz>

⁶² "Access Denied," *op. cit.*, p. 38.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ Employment, Transgender Law Center, <http://transgenderlawcenter.org/issues/employment>

6. YOUTH AND SENIORS

6.1 Transitional and Affordable Housing

We praised the LGBTQ Homeless Youth Reform Amendment Act⁶⁵ and the LGBT-inclusive Age-Friendly DC Initiative.^{66, 67} Casa Ruby received a District grant in 2014 to run transitional housing for LGBT youth.^{68, 69, 70} *The Washington Post* reports on further grants:

Other recipients of the city's grant money include Wanda Alston House; HIPS DC, which provides health services to people involved with sex work and drug use; Sasha Bruce Youthwork, which helps homeless, runaway, abused and neglected kids; and the DC Center for the LGBT Community. Wanda Alston House also received \$20,000 from Verizon, and [SMYAL] received \$25,000.⁷¹

We commend Dr. Imani Woody, who is addressing the lack of safe space for LGBT seniors by developing Mary's House for Older Adults in Fort Dupont.⁷²

These worthy efforts fall short of the need. A youth census in 2015 found that 43 percent of homeless youth in D.C. identify as LGBT.⁷³ D.C. lacks specialized housing services for LGBT adults. District leaders should fund the Housing Production Trust Fund, Permanent Supportive Housing, and Local Rent Supplement Program at adequate levels. They should commit to improving services, treatment, and housing options for all homeless youth and adults. The District might want to emulate an innovative smartphone app that connects homeless LGBT youth in Cincinnati to resources.⁷⁴ The District's failure to keep data on LGBT housing is another problem. Ten percent of adults in the District identify as LGBT.⁷⁵ Data on this population and its needs should be maintained across the District government.

6.2 Youth Risk Behavior Survey

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) reported in 2012 that lesbian, gay, and bisexual middle school youth were 5.3 times likelier to have attempted suicide in their lifetimes, and LGBQ high school youth were 2.3 times likelier to have attempted suicide in the previous 12 months. This is from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) conducted by OSSE working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.⁷⁶ YRBS also found that "LGB youth in D.C. are also at a disproportionate risk for substance use."⁷⁷ YRBS must include transgender students, who are at higher risk than their LGB peers.⁷⁸

⁶⁵ LGBTQ Homeless Youth Reform Amendment Act of 2013, Bill 20-51, Committee Print, December 11, 2013, <http://tinyurl.com/mshopbl>

⁶⁶ Letter to Mayor Vincent C. Gray, Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance, November 7, 2014, <http://tinyurl.com/dkzdkd>

⁶⁷ "The Age-Friendly DC Initiative," DC Office on Aging, <http://dcoa.dc.gov/page/age-friendly-dc-initiative>

⁶⁸ "Casa Ruby wins grant for homeless facility," Lou Chibbaro Jr., *Washington Blade*, November 19, 2014, <http://tinyurl.com/gsheany>

⁶⁹ "Casa Ruby house for homeless LGBT youth set to open," Lou Chibbaro Jr., *Washington Blade*, May 14, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/z5d5wt7>

⁷⁰ "Casa Ruby Looks To Provide Wintertime Emergency Housing For Homeless LGBT Youth," Rachel Sadon, *DCist*, November 17, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/zat2myr>

⁷¹ "Nearly half of homeless youth are LGBTQ, first-ever city census finds," Tara Bahrapour, *The Washington Post*, January 13, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/hhol82c>

⁷² "Senior and out of the closet: DC nonprofit aims to provide affordable housing for LGBT elders," Christina Sturdivant, *Elevation DC*, June 8, 2015,

<http://tinyurl.com/j29zl62>

⁷³ "Nearly half of homeless youth are LGBTQ, first-ever city census finds," Tara Bahrapour, *The Washington Post*, January 13, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/z9ghqpu>

⁷⁴ "App for homeless teens connects LGBTQ teens to resources," Angela Ingram, Local12.com, February 26, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/h55eafb>

⁷⁵ "The Gayest Place in America?" Jeremy W. Peters, *The New York Times*, November 15, 2013, <http://tinyurl.com/mghwxfu>

⁷⁶ "District of Columbia Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2012," Office of the State Superintendent of Education, p. 29, <http://tinyurl.com/hmu23dm>

⁷⁷ "District of Columbia Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2012," *op. cit.*, p. 30

⁷⁸ "Center Facts: LGBT Youth in the District of Columbia," http://www.thedccenter.org/facts_youth.html

The Youth Suicide Prevention and School Climate Survey Act of 2015 was introduced in September 2015 by Councilmembers Grosso, Allen, McDuffie, Bonds, Cheh, Nadeau, May, Todd, Silverman, and Chairman Mendelson, and co-sponsored by Councilmembers Orange and Evans.⁷⁹ It was marked up in January 2016.⁸⁰ We commend Education Committee chairman Grosso for his prompt action on this important legislation.⁸¹

6.3 Anti-Bullying Law and DCPS Efforts

The D.C. Council in 2012 passed the Youth Bullying Prevention Act,⁸² and D.C. Public Schools (DCPS) has pursued its own anti-bullying initiatives. The Citywide Youth Bullying Prevention Program is operated out of the Office of Human Rights (OHR).^{83, 84} A District-wide Model Bullying Prevention Policy was issued by the Youth Bullying Prevention Task Force on January 31, 2013.⁸⁵ Officials from OHR, OSSE, and the youth-research organization Child Trends in November 2015 announced "a \$3.8 million grant from the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) to focus on school climate and bullying prevention in District schools through implementation of the Safe School Certification Program (SSCP)."⁸⁶ The program is to begin in the 2016 - 2017 school year. We look forward to the District's SSCP implementation and evaluation.

6.4 Health Education

GLAA strongly supports DCPS Health Standards that include sexual orientation and gender identity as part of "the knowledge and skills that students need to maintain and improve their health and wellness, prevent disease, and reduce health-jeopardizing behaviors." The scientific consensus is what should be taught. It is essential to monitor and enforce compliance to ensure that teachers and principals do not disregard DCPS policy in favor of their own biases.

6.5 Training and Funding for Senior Services

Implementation of culturally competent policies and training in senior services can foster an environment that provides confidence and security for the District's LGBT seniors. The D.C. Office on Aging should use the Washington, D.C. LGBT Aging Coalition of Elders as a resource. Funding specifically targeting LGBT senior services could provide a sustained basis for fostering partnerships and coordinating efforts for more efficiency with District of Columbia aging service providers. Ample evidence now shows the distinctive needs within the older LGBT population. Transgender older adults and ethnic and racial minority LGBT seniors often live below the poverty level and have heightened and cumulative risks of health disparities. Such funding could also provide opportunities for more accurately assessing the needs of our seniors. LGBT elders often have less family support, and need help to maintain their independence.⁸⁷

⁷⁹ Youth Suicide Prevention and School Climate Survey Act of 2015, Bill 21-0361, <http://tinyurl.com/grzi3u4>

⁸⁰ Committee Report, Youth Suicide Prevention and School Climate Survey Act of 2015, January 27, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/jum9soh>

⁸¹ "Trevor Helps Introduce the D.C. Youth Suicide Prevention & School Climate Survey Act," The Trevor Project, undated, <http://tinyurl.com/j9mwbug>

⁸² Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012, D.C. Law 19-167, <http://tinyurl.com/huxt5fi>

⁸³ Citywide Youth Bullying Prevention Program, Office of Human Rights, <http://ohr.dc.gov/page/bullyingprevention>

⁸⁴ "OHR FY14 Performance Oversight Response," D.C. Office of Human Rights, March 10, 2015, <http://tinyurl.com/jc69y3r>

⁸⁵ "District-Wide Model Bullying Prevention Policy," Office of Human Rights, January 31, 2013, <http://ohr.dc.gov/node/419342>

⁸⁶ "Federal Grant Provides \$3.8 Million for Bullying Prevention in the District," Office of the State Superintendent of Education, November 6, 2015,

<http://tinyurl.com/jh7qo4c>

⁸⁷ "LGBT Seniors Shouldn't Die Penniless and Alone," Bruce Williams, *The Advocate*, January 19, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/h3nd7jr>

7. CONSUMERS AND BUSINESSES

7.1 Defending Adult Entertainment

The hospitality industry generates a good deal of the District's revenue, and adult entertainment is part of the mix. Those who disapprove of nude dancing establishments are free to avoid them, but should not be permitted to boss their neighbors on matters that are none of their business.⁸⁸

7.2 Rectifying Soccer Stadium Displacements

The planned soccer stadium at Buzzard Point will lead to displacement of a gay-related establishment, Ziegfeld's/Secrets, which features adult entertainment. The building housing it is being sold to a developer,⁸⁹ and the nightclub faces virtual impossibility in relocating without action by the Council and Mayor. We ruefully recall the club relocation bill of 2007,⁹⁰ whose passage occasioned a round of mutual congratulations on the Council dais after it was amended into virtual uselessness. That body should replace NIMBYism with a suitable cosmopolitanism, and find a solution to serve the gay market and prevent the extinction of this legitimate class of entertainment.

⁸⁸ "Liquor board suspends Ziegfeld's/Secrets license," *Washington Blade*, June 8, 2010, <http://tinyurl.com/32uyhfo>

⁸⁹ "Ziegfeld's-Secrets building to be sold to developer," Lou Chibbaro Jr., *Washington Blade*, February 16, 2016, <http://tinyurl.com/zpvj9rk>

⁹⁰ One-Time Relocation of Licensees Displaced by the Ballpark and Skyland Development Project Act of 2007, D.C. Law 17-24, <http://tinyurl.com/k4lho3r>