



The Caribbean-American Political Action Committee

1015 18th Street, N.W., Suite 200, Washington, D.C., 20036 | 202-349-1498
| www.CaribbeanPac.org

Caribbean-American Political Action Committee (C-PAC) District of Columbia – 2018 Candidate Questionnaire

Please return the completed form via email to cpac.dmv@gmail.com by Friday, April 13, 2018.
Responses will be shared with C-PAC’s membership.

Office Sought: AT-Large, DC Council

Candidate’s Name: Jeremiah Lowery

Current Occupation: N/A

Party: Democrat

Campaign contact information (Address, Phone, Fax, Email, Website): 3910 Georgia Ave NW, #406 Washington DC 20011, info@jeremiah2018.com, jeremiah2018.com

1. Please explain your plan or approach to improve agency responsiveness and the quality of the District’s constituent services.

Within my first few months in office I would introduce legislation to create an office of Caribbean Community Affairs, and would include 2 community outreach coordinators, and the development of a Caribbean business roundtable in the legislation.

I would provide oversight to make sure the office is doing what caribbean leaders intended for it to do.

2. What specific actions have you initiated or will you take to support the Caribbean-American community in Washington, D.C.?

The median age for the Caribbean-American population is 44 years old and below and 14-31 percent are below the age of 18, this means there are a lot of members of the Caribbean-American community who have families or considering starting a family. Therefore I would:

1. Expand access to childcare to all parents in DC, with a strong focus on making sure our Caribbean-American population is covered. As the director of the Universal Childcare Coalition, I have already begun the process.
2. I will make sure that we have up-to-date cultural competency training and evaluations for our educators in the school system, that includes school meals. As a member of the DC



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Food Policy Council, we are creating the good food procurement program in DC, and it includes making sure we have cultural rich and nutritious food for our students.

I would also fight to make sure

1. There is funding in the budget to do outreach to the Caribbean-American population about their tenants rights and ways to secure and quality for affordable housing in DC.
2. I will also work with Caribbean-American business owners to develop commercial rent control policies to ensure our small businesses are able to stay in DC. I will also work with the Caribbean-American business community to roll systemic back red tape and regulatory barriers that prevent our small businesses from starting up
3. I will also enforce DC Cottage Food law and will fight to include funding to conduct outreach to the Caribbean-American community about the law
3. Unfortunately, throughout the City many Caribbean-owned businesses closed in recent years. How will you support the viability and competitiveness of the City's small, minority, veteran, women, and especially Caribbean-owned businesses?

I plan to introduce legislation to create a commercial rent control law for all small businesses. The law would include policies measures to control rent for small businesses and include a measure that would make it easier for small businesses to buy their storefront from developers.

4. What policy actions would you propose or support to improve the opportunities and rights of Caribbean immigrants in the District of Columbia?

I plan to introduce legislation that would close the loop-hole that allows MPD to communicate with ICE, and would truly make DC a safe city for all immigrants.

I support passage of updating our language access laws to cover DCPS and all schools. I would introduce an amendment to the language access law to direct the DC government to come up cultural competency protocols to support caribbean immigrants in our school system

I would work with DC govt agencies to make sure our all our employment and housing program resources are reaching the the caribbean immigrant community, and I will also fight for funding



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in the budget to direct the housing and employment agencies to do outreach specifically to the caribbean immigrant community, to inform them of resources that are available to them.

I will fight for funding in the budget to create scholarship and mentorship programs specifically for caribbean immigrants

5. The City's Caribbean Community is the only immigrant community without an Office to address and support community affairs and services. Would you support the creation of such an office?

Yes I would support the creation and would introduce legislation within my first few months in office.

6. How do you plan to help strengthen the Certified Business Enterprise (CBE) program since larger business take advantage of many small businesses, including Caribbean-owned ones, with whom they partner under this program?

I would look into funding a minimum of \$1,500,000 be restored to its local budget to fund additional FTEs which will address the personnel deficit in the CBE Program compliance and enforcement functions. I would specifically ask that the additional funding be used to work on cases that include Sub-Contracting Requirements for Contracts over \$250,000 and Equity Participation Requirements for Development Projects.

I support funding and additional two CBE Compliance Investigators, to investigate CBEs when requested by the OIG or when a sworn complaint has been received when a CBE is suspected of violating legal and regulatory requirements of the program.

I support the creation of an Caribbean small business owners roundtable, included in the legislation to create an Office of Caribbean Community Affairs. The roundtable would put out a yearly report on the needs of the Caribbean small business community and the budget and legislative measures needed to meet their needs.



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7. What policies will you support to address the challenges facing DREAMers, the administration's suspension of temporary protective status for many D.C. residents, and the threats facing sanctuary cities?

I plan to introduce legislation that would close the loop-hole that allows MPD to communicate with ICE, and would truly make DC a safe city for all immigrants.

In my first year in office, I will fight for funding in the budget to create college scholarship opportunities and mentorship programs specifically for caribbean immigrants and DREAMers

I support increasing funding for a legal defense fund for DREAMers, and I find money in the budget for the fund to specifically do outreach to the caribbean community about their rights.

8. What concrete steps will you take to improve the District of Columbia's Public School system – including facilities and equipment, teacher treatment, relationships with parents, as well as education standards and test scores in all wards of the City?

I support the full modernization of all schools by 2020, and would introduce legislation to make it law, directing the DC government to speed up the process.

I support lowering the classroom size limit, especially for elementary grades. I will work to ensure that all teachers have access to appropriate professional development and will never have to pay for supplies out of pocket. I will also strengthen due process for teachers and eliminate merit pay. Student-to-teacher ratio should be proportional to the needs of the schools.

I would support laws mandating that the data be available to the teachers educating our students, and establish that the purpose of standardized testing is primarily to provide actionable data to inform instructions and secondary for accountability.

I will look at all legislative solutions to give teachers more classroom autonomy, and I will work with the chancellor to create a system where we are supporting principal training and recruitment (principals who foster a positive environment for teachers), and on a yearly basis I



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will have my staff work with WTU and the administration to analyze the conditions associated with turnover so that better policy strategies can be developed and implemented.

To strengthen parent relationships I would:

Push OSSE and DC Council on what they are doing to meet parents on their turf - I would push my council colleagues to have more hearings on educational issues on the weekends and weekday evenings. I would also question OSSE during the oversight hearings about what they are doing to host hearings and events in the community

Seek Parent Volunteers. I would push for some funding in the budget to create and fund more programs for parents who want to volunteer with their local school system, as well as support for PTAs in low income communities.

Hire-Parent-Friendly Principals. At the oversight hearings I would question what OSSE is doing to hire more principals who are parent-friendly and are implementing innovative models for parent engagement.

9. In Washington, D.C., many seniors seek to age in their homes and/or communities. What efforts will you take to improve access of services and the quality of programs for the City's senior citizens?

I support the fully implementation of the age friendly dc plan and will work to ensure it has the funding and oversight it needs to meet its goal.

Property Owner Tax Relief for older DC Residents (lowering the age from 65 to 55)

I support the creation of more mobile farmers markets for senior centers (farm to senior center)

I support the creation of a Housing Assistance Program for Unsubsidized Seniors

I would like to see a State-run retirement plan like california for our seniors. A plan that would supplement social security.



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I would work with the AGs office to ensure our consumer protection laws and policies that prevent predatory practices are reaching seniors, and if not, I would fight for funding for an outreach program to inform seniors of their rights.

10. What issues are you most concerned about in your run for political office?

Right now, DC has the most expensive childcare system in the United States and many low-to-middle income parents have to make the choice of working or staying home and watching their kid(s).

Ensuring increased access to childcare would allow more parents (especially low-to-no income parents) to enter the workforce or continue their education. I would also work to ensure that paid family leave (a campaign that I was actively involved in) is fully funded and implemented properly. Also, as one of the lead organizers of the campaigns to raise the minimum wage and expand paid sick days, I will work to ensure the Office of Wage-Hour is enforcing the law.

As a member of the DC Food Policy Council and board member of the DC Sierra Club, I have worked with coalitions on expanding grocery store access East of River, and have supported policies to expand transportation options to all parts of the city. Food and transportation are big budget items for low income residents and I will be a strong advocate who will work with coalitions to make food and transportation equitable for all residents.

The #1 issue that I am most concerned about is displacement among immigrant and black and brown residents, if elected, I would:

Reform rent control: Right now landlords and developers can exploit provisions in DC's rent control law: They're able to use rent adjustment petitions to get tenants to sign "voluntary agreements" and hardship petitions to increase rents far above rent control limits. We need to close these loopholes that some developers and landlords have been exploiting. I would work with advocates to close these loopholes and strengthen our rent control law.

I support legislation that would mandate an increase in a percentage of affordable housing for low-to-very income residents in every new development. I would also use legislative measures to push for a comprehensive housing plan that cuts the housing waitlist by 80%. I would also assess the impact of more accurate AMI measurements.



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I would work with advocates and the DC government to use community land trusts as a model to build and ensure long-term affordable housing. Lastly, I would support increasing the amount of money we use in the Housing Production Trust Fund. Housing is the #1 concern for residents in Washington, DC: It should be a major part of our budget every year, and I would work with advocates on increasing our housing funding until it is at the appropriate levels to address our housing crisis.

Having a mother who is formerly homeless in DC, this issue is near and dear to my heart. I am in full support of “The Way Home” campaign and their budget and policy priorities to end chronic homelessness. I would work with the partners in that campaign to ensure we are meeting their budget goals each year, until we finally end chronic homelessness in DC.

The DC government also as a plan to end or greatly limit homelessness in DC, the “Homeward DC” plan by 2020. I would work with government officials and advocates to introduce legislation or fight for budget items to make sure we are meeting our 2020 goals. During oversight hearings, I will make sure these goals come up and will question government officials on the progress and what's needed to ensure we are on the right track.

I would also introduce a “redevelopment in place” bill, that would direct the DC government to look into funding mechanism to ensure residents are able to stay in their building during renovations. The bill would provide the necessary resources to developers for one-for-one replacement of low-cost units. This could be by delivering subsidies and permitting denser development that can cross-subsidize below-market rate units.

I would also push for strong vacant property enforcement - at present, too many are unidentified: That's why I will work to hold DCRA accountable to ensure that every vacant property is identified, pays its fair share in taxes, and is encouraged to be put to good use.