

Response to Caribbean-American Political Action Committee Questionnaire

Manuel Rivera, Candidate for Attorney General of the District of Columbia

1. If elected, how would you proactively and consistently engage with Caribbean-American constituents, groups, local leaders, and organizations in your constituency?

Thank you for the opportunity to respond to the Caribbean community's concerns. As someone born in Puerto Rico who came to the United States in search of opportunities, I understand firsthand the importance of community, cultural identity, and being heard. The Caribbean-American community is not only part of our city—it is part of my own story. If elected, I will establish a **consistent, structured engagement strategy** that includes roundtables with Caribbean-American leaders, faith-based organizations, and small business owners. I will also designate community **liaison within the Office of the Attorney General (OAG)**. This office will be called the **Peoples' OAG** to ensure ongoing communication, rapid response to concerns, and meaningful participation in policy discussions. Engagement will not be symbolic—it will be operational and continuous.

2. How would your office address barriers Caribbean immigrants face when accessing public services such as healthcare, safe, affordable housing, education or social programs that disproportionately affect them?

Addressing Barriers to Public Services

My office will prioritize **legal enforcement and accountability** where Caribbean immigrants face barriers in housing, healthcare access, and public services. This includes:

- Enforcing **consumer protection laws** against predatory landlords and fraudulent service providers
- Addressing discrimination in housing and employment
- Working with agencies to ensure **clear access pathways and legal compliance** in service delivery

We will also expand **know-your-rights initiatives** tailored to immigrant communities.

3. How do you ensure culturally responsive services for Caribbean-American residents across agencies (e.g., health, education, law enforcement, etc.)?

Culturally Responsive Services

Culturally responsive services begin with **representation, training, and accountability**. I will:

- Advocate for **cultural competency training** across agencies
- Promote hiring practices that reflect DC's Caribbean diversity
- Ensure language access and outreach are **not afterthoughts but built into service delivery**

The Attorney General's office will lead by example in how it communicates and engages.

4. What initiatives will you lead and/or support that benefit Caribbean-American small business owners and workers, particularly in industries where they are heavily represented?

Supporting Caribbean-American Small Businesses

Caribbean-American entrepreneurs are vital to DC's economy. I will:

- Strengthen enforcement against **fraud, unfair business practices, and regulatory abuse**
- Provide **legal education programs** for small business owners
- Support partnerships that expand access to capital and contracting opportunities

My goal is to ensure small businesses can grow **without unnecessary bureaucratic obstacles**.

5. What support would you provide for Caribbean-American students and parents, including language assistance and help navigating the school system?

Support for Students and Parents

While education policy is not directly under the Attorney General, my office can play a key role by:

- Ensuring **language access rights are enforced** in schools
- Protecting families from discriminatory practices
- Supporting legal clarity for parents navigating school systems

I will also collaborate with community organizations to provide **legal literacy resources for families**.

6. How would you advance partnerships with Caribbean-American community organizations to promote mental health, chronic disease prevention, or other wellness initiatives?

Partnerships for Health and Wellness

I will support partnerships with Caribbean-American organizations to address:

- Mental health stigma and access
- Chronic disease prevention
- Community-based wellness programs

The OAG can assist by **supporting enforcement of healthcare access laws**, combating **fraud**, and facilitating partnerships that expand outreach.

7. How will you build trust and conduct robust oversight on local, law enforcement to protect the rights, security, and safety of Caribbean-American residents?

Building Trust & Law Enforcement Oversight

Public safety must go hand-in-hand with **fairness and accountability**. I will:

- Strengthen **independent oversight of law enforcement practices**
- Ensure constitutional protections are upheld
- Promote transparency and community engagement

I believe that trust is built when communities see that the law is applied **fairly and consistently**. **Furthermore, I will work hard to build strong, results driven partnership with the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), the Mayor, and the City Council to ensure that our nation's capital is among the safest in North America and the world.** Millions of visitors travel to Washington, D.C. each year, contributing significantly millions of dollars to our local economy. It is essential that residents and visitors alike feel safe and confident in our city.

8. What programs, funding opportunities, or policy efforts will you champion that are aimed at improving outcomes for Caribbean-American communities?

Programs, Funding & Policy Advocacy

I will advocate for:

- Targeted **consumer protection enforcement** in vulnerable communities
- Increased support for **community-based legal services**
- Policies that remove systemic barriers to economic mobility

I think that the Attorney General's office must use its authority to ensure **equity under the law**.

9. How will you ensure that the Mayor's Office of Caribbean Community Affairs is fully funded, adequately staffed, and realizes its mission?

Mayor's Office of Caribbean Community Affairs

While the Attorney General does not control funding, I will:

- Publicly support full funding and staffing of the office
- Collaborate to ensure its mission is realized through **legal support and inter-agency coordination**
- Use my platform to elevate the importance of this office in serving the community

10. Washington, D.C. adopted the [Local Resident Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2022](#), which permits noncitizens who reside in D.C. for at least 30 days before the election and are at least 18 years old to vote for local offices and ballot initiatives. How will you support awareness and implementation of this law?

Local Resident Voting Rights Amendment Act (2022)

As Attorney General, my responsibility is to **uphold and implement the law as enacted**. I will:

- Ensure accurate, lawful implementation of the Act
- Support **clear public education efforts** so eligible residents understand their rights
- Ensure that implementation respects both **legal integrity and public confidence**

I would like to add that I came to Washington, D.C. from Rhode Island to study law with a belief in opportunity, hard work, and determined to succeed and create opportunities for others. That promise must include safe communities, fair access to

justice, and real opportunity for every family—including the Caribbean-American community that has contributed so much to our nation capital.

The Caribbean-American community is an essential part of Washington, D.C.'s cultural and economic fabric. As Attorney General, I will bring a **balanced approach—strong on public safety, firm on the rule of law, and committed to fairness, opportunity, and respect for all communities.**