

Office Sought: DC Council, At-Large

Candidate's Name: David Garber

Party: Democrat

Campaign contact information

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

Response:

My policy ideas on education and small business will strengthen opportunities for Caribbean immigrants in the District. Whether through facilities improvement or increasing the diversity in educational programming, my focus on education will help Caribbean families raising children get a quality public education. As for small businesses, my primary goal is to make DC a place that supports small and local businesses. My policy goals are to create a more reliable regulatory system, ease taxes, provide access to capital in targeted areas through gap-financing, and increase the number of local businesses that get contracts with DC government.

- 2) How do you plan to help D.C.-based small and medium sized – especially Caribbean-owned -- businesses realize a greater share of D.C Government contracting opportunities?

Response:

I am dedicated to transforming DC's reputation from being a place where it's tedious and frustrating to do business, to one that supports and engages the small and local businesses that give life, character, and walkability to our neighborhoods. Additionally, we can and should do more to advance policies that actively pursue local economic growth for communities that so far have been left behind.

My goal as Councilmember will be to help the District become more efficient and business friendly by creating a more reliable and intuitive regulatory system, easing taxes for small businesses, and increasing access to capital and other District resources – including evaluating how District procurement contracts can better reflect the diversity of our local economy.

- 3) 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?

Response:

My main priorities for improving the District's public school system are: facilities improvement, tackling economic disparity, and increasing the diversity in educational programming.

Facilities improvement: We have done a great job of improving many school facilities across the District, but some communities are still being left behind. We must fully fund school renovation and modernization projects so that families have full confidence in our public school system and so that kids are given the best environment in which to succeed.

Economic disparity: One of my top platform issues is making the District more inclusive of the full diversity of residents that call DC home, and better spreading economic development and diversity to communities that have been left behind. By creating opportunities and pathways to success for kids in all communities across the District, we will better serve kids as they grow through our public education system.

Educational Programming: Right now many families are choosing charter programs because of their diversity of programming: e.g. language immersion. We must continue to invest in diverse programming that will lead our students to success, no matter which corner of the District they are in. Additionally, the city should invest more heavily (and create additional schools) in magnet programming for kids interested in the arts.

- 4) What efforts do you support to make higher education accessible and affordable to all D.C residents who aspire towards completing collegiate and advanced degrees?

Response:

Closing the achievement gap so that more students who graduate from our schools are ready for college will go to making college success achievable. But even if a student is college-ready, a family may not be able to afford the costs of a college education. This is why I am in support of the DC TAG program and the DC Promise.

- 5) How would you propose improving access to quality, affordable health care services to DC residents, especially those who reside East of the River?

Response:

As a former resident of Ward 8, I understand that folks who live East of the River often feel and are ignored by the District, and the lack of access to quality and affordable health care services is just one example of our need to do more. While the implementation of the Affordable Care Act has helped more people get insured, there are few healthcare services available East of the River and more can be done to encourage our three largest hospitals (Children's, UMC, and Howard) to increase the number of behavioral health and preventive health services in Wards 7 and 8.

- 6) For many years the Caribbean Carnival was a fixture in the District of Columbia. Would you support the return of the Carnival to DC with financial support from the DC government?

Response:

I would support bringing back the Caribbean Carnival to DC, and would work with parade organizers to identify what resources can be used to make this a reality.

- 7) The City's Caribbean Community has consistently called for the creation of an Office of Caribbean-American Affairs in DC. Would you support the creation of such an office?

Response:

I would consider supporting the creation of an Office of Caribbean-American Affairs in DC. Supporting opportunities to increase trade and tourism between the District and the Caribbean or supporting economic development and small business growth for local Caribbean immigrants are some of the main objectives I think would be good for such an office.