



**Metropolitan Washington Council
AFL-CIO**

**2018 District of Columbia
Committee on Political Education
PRIMARY ELECTIONS**

CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Overview:

The Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO, is comprised of 185 local unions representing working people in all public industry sectors. The Metropolitan Washington Council AFL-CIO's priorities are outlined below:

- Creating family sustaining jobs for all;
- Investing in education, infrastructure, healthcare and transportation;
- Improving the lives of workers through education, quality job training, career advancement and livable wages with good benefits;
- Ensuring fair, progressive tax policies;
- Making high-quality, affordable healthcare available to everyone;
- Holding corporations and government more accountable to ensure that the public good
- Is served by taxpayer dollars; and
- ensuring that a worker's universal right to organize and to bargain collectively for
- wages, hours and conditions of work are maintained and enforced.

Metropolitan Washington Council AFL-CIO

2018 CANDIDATE'S QUESTIONNAIRE

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Name: Lisa Hunter

Address: 1211 C Street SE

City / County: Washington, DC 20003

Phone: 202-930-2631 Email: lisa@lisahunterforward6.com

Candidate for: DC Council, Ward 6

Campaign Committee Name and Address: Lisa Hunter for Ward 6. Same address as above

Campaign Committee Phone: same as above

Email / Web: lisa@lisahunterforward6.com / lisaforward6.com

Does your campaign accept PAC contributions? No.

PLEASE EXPLAIN WHY YOU SEEK LABOR'S ENDORSEMENT:

I am not a career politician. I am the daughter of a Mexican-American mother who grew up in a union household and defended workers' rights as an attorney before she retired, and a father who continues to defend unions and organized labor as an attorney in California. I am a Peace Corps and Obama administration alum who has dedicated my career to public service. I am the only former educator in this race, and the only person to have worked at the highest levels of our health care and political system. I am also a neighbor who has watched too many people in our community unable to find jobs that pay a living wage, unable to age in place, and ultimately, unable to remain in their longtime neighborhoods. In a city where our DC Council's campaign accounts are dominated by corporate developers, it's easy to see how the money has pushed the Council to move bills that have benefitted wealthy donors at the expense of workers, families, and neighbors. That ends with me.

I am running because we are leaving too many of our neighbors behind. We have given hundreds of millions of taxpayer subsidies to developers, while looking the other way as these developers fail to hire union workers, fail to comply with wage theft laws, and rent commercial space to tenants who fail to hire locally when the job is complete. My opponent, Charles Allen, accepts money from all of these developers, which is why he has looked the other way as this story has played out time and time again, at The Wharf, in Navy Yard, at Union Market, and elsewhere throughout our city. Somehow, over the last four years we have erected shiny new buildings everywhere, and my opponent's donors have gotten richer, yet there is no affordable housing to be found, and no jobs for local residents that pay a living wage, provide health benefits, pensions, or any form of economic security to speak of. As a result, Ward 6 is home to some of the worst health and economic disparities in the nation. The exact opposite of what we aspire to be. It's time for a change.

SIGNATURE: *Lisa Hunter* (completed and submitted electronically by Lisa Hunter) DATE: May 6, 2018

Please return your signed questionnaire by Wednesday, May 9, 2018 to the below address:

Metropolitan Washington Council, AFL-CIO

Attn.: David Dzidzienyo

815 16th St NW, Washington, DC, 20006

Submissions can also be e-mail to ddzidzienyo@dclabor.org

2018 Candidate Questionnaire

A. Workplace Rights: (Please answer by checking the box)

There are certain basic workplace rights that the unions and members of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO believe are fundamental and absolutely essential. Collective bargaining elections and representation are permitted for private sector employees, whereas for public sector employees in Maryland, legislation is required in order to have those same rights. Over the past decade, these rights have been given to many states, higher education and K-12 public school education employees and some county employees. However, thousands of public sector employees are still denied these rights.

1. Would you support comprehensive collective bargaining legislation that would provide collective bargaining rights (including exclusivity, binding arbitration and an independent labor board) for all public employees-local, county, school boards and state?

Support **Oppose** **Not sure**

What is your position on each of these fundamental rights?

2. The right of workers to organize and have union representation

Support **Oppose** **Not sure**

3. The right to freely exercise workplace rights free from harassment, intimidation and/or delays

Support **Oppose** **Not sure**

4. The right to bargain collectively with a legal obligation on both sides to negotiate in good faith

Support **Oppose** **Not sure**

5. The right to resolve differences in a fair, impartial and timely manner, including binding arbitration

Support **Oppose** **Not sure**

The National Labor Relations Act grants private sector workers the right to organize themselves and be represented by a union in collective bargaining negotiations. From time to time, opponents of collective bargaining propose legislation to curtail workers' bargaining strength and effectiveness. Under the innocuous sounding name of "Right-to-Work," this legislation purports to protect the rights of workers and improve the state's economic development climate. But the net result in Right-to Work states is that workers earn less, have fewer health care benefits and have higher job fatality rates. Right to Work laws prohibit workers from negotiating a "union shop" or "union security" clause in their contracts. Such a clause obligates those in the bargaining unit to pay their fair share of the collective bargaining representation costs. By wiping out that protection, Right to Work actually weakens the rights of working people.

6. Would you support Right to Work in DC?

Yes

No

Not sure

Opponents of the labor movement have tried in recent years to stifle labor's political and legislative voice through a friendly sounding proposal called "paycheck protection." It proposes to give rank and file members more control over how their dues money is spent. It does so by requiring unions to spend an incalculable amount of time and money jumping through bureaucratic hoops. The net effect is that it would make it virtually impossible for unions to represent their members in the political and legislative arenas.

7. What is your position on the so-called paycheck protection idea?

Support

Oppose

Not sure

When workers choose an exclusive collective bargaining representative, that union is legally obligated to represent every worker in the unit. Even when some people choose to be non-members, the union must represent them fully and fairly. In other words, those who pay dues are obligated to subsidize those who don't.

8. In your opinion, should a union be permitted to collect a service fee from non-members for the cost of union representation as long as there are protections for those who object on religious grounds?

Yes

No

not sure

9. Please provide us with at least two examples of what you have done legislatively to support workers' rights?

[I am most proud of my work on the Affordable Care Act during the Obama administration, which not only expanded access to health coverage for those without employer-sponsored coverage, but also provided all workers with key consumer protections such as an essential health benefits package, coverage for preventive services without cost sharing, and a commitment from insurance companies to spend a minimum of 80 cents of every dollar on care, not profits, executive compensation or overhead. These changes had a very real impact for workers and their families, who saw expanded access to doctors and basic healthcare, expanded financial assistance in the event of an unexpected illness or injury, and the ability to access essential coverage and benefits that were required to be covered in-network, and with low cost-sharing. In addition to improving the health of our workforce, these protections improved the financial security of our families.

My record of supporting workers' rights began early in my career, when I earned a fellowship to work as a legal assistant at Bet Tzedek, conducting intake and engaging with workers facing exploitation from unscrupulous employers, often because of their immigration status.]

B: Workforce Violence:

1. What is your position on work place violence in the Hospital and Health care facilities?

[As the only candidate in this race to have worked at the Department of Health and Human Services, I am very familiar with the workplace dynamic faced by workers in our provider settings. Some studies suggest that workplace injuries due to violence occur more frequently in health care settings than in all other industries combined, so it's important that we recognize the enhanced risk to workers by supporting enhanced policies that protect workers.]

2. How do you see yourself as an elected leader championing this issue for workers?

[We must start by empowering workers to report instances of workplace violence. Currently, we know that these incidents are underreported, and we know the reasons are largely related to fear of retaliation or loss of job. Workers should not be subjected to a potentially dangerous workplace simply because they are depending on their job for income and risk losing it should they speak up. Strict whistleblower protections and other policies that protect workers who file complaints should be mandatory, should be in place at all health care facilities, and should be subject to collective bargaining. When the government is the payer, such as in the Medicaid program, reporting and quality measures could be required as a condition of participation, so we ensure that our taxpayer dollars are going to facilities that are actively protecting their workers.]

C: Health Care: (Please answer by checking the box)

Nurses and other health care workers are often required to perform manual lifting of patients, without support offered by additional personnel, equipment, or training. As a result, registered nurses experience high rates of musculoskeletal disorders and injuries from lifting patients. Such injuries can have long-term detrimental effects on workers' ability to perform daily tasks, leaving them with chronic debilitating pain and often forcing them to leave the workforce. Indeed, about 12 percent of the nursing workforce leaves the bedside each year due to back injuries.

Do you support legislation that would require every healthcare employer to implement a comprehensive, evidence-based safe patient handling program that includes the use of lift teams, patient handling equipment, and proper training for healthcare workers?

Yes

No

other (explain below)

2. Health disparities, including those resulting in deaths, in the District of Columbia between black and white residents and between those in different wards are severe. Do you believe these disparities are a serious problem?

Yes

No

other (explain below)

If so, what policies are you proposing to eliminate these disparities?

[My opponent has proposed that we simply study a portion of the problem. This answer is unacceptable to me, because we know there are things we can be doing right now to alleviate these disparities, and while our government spends an untold amount of time studying, people will die.

First, we know we have to meet people where they are. There is a stark inequality in health care resources in this city, and poor, black residents are being disproportionately harmed. Two of the last remaining health centers in Wards 7 and 8 closed this year, leaving people in Southeast without a trustworthy, local space to receive much-needed care. There's an easy answer to this problem—ensure highly qualified, accessible care throughout the city, not just in its wealthiest neighborhoods. Independent from the clinic closures, a switch in Medicaid contracts automatically transferred many patients to a plan that MedStar does not accept. Without any notice, patients were told they had to switch providers or forego care altogether. This could have been avoided. [Community advocates](#) and the [Department of Health](#) have called for full integration of services, but the DC Council did not act.

There are community organizations, government agencies, private sector, and academic initiatives aiming to improve maternal health care in DC, but their efficacy will be limited so long as they operate separately. We can't let major changes, like the latest insurance contracts or clinic locations, slip through the cracks.]

Will you highlight these problems in your election campaign?

Yes

No

other (explain below)

[I have been doing so. One reason I am running is because my opponent has ignored these issues for four years to the detriment of our community. Several write ups can be found on my website: lisahunterforward6.com/updates]

3. Currently 28 million Americans, including at least 26,000 people in the District of Columbia, have no health insurance. Although the District government moved to expand Medicaid to cover an additional 35,000 people and has created an insurance exchange pursuant to the federal Affordable Care Act, it is the case now and will continue to be true that many people with health insurance cannot afford to use it due to high premiums, high deductibles and high co-pays. Nurses are concerned about the impact on access to health services resulting from limited networks of providers,

and high out-of-pocket costs. Health insurance companies have reported record stock price increases, and hospitals anticipate increased revenues as well.

Furthermore, the subsidies promised under the Affordable Care Act may not be available because of federal budget constraints, and could be insufficient for many Americans with low and moderate incomes. And the DC government contracts with private insurance companies to administer the District’s Medicaid program, while some states administer their Medicaid insurance program in-house at approximately half the cost.

4. Will you support a “patient bill of rights” to ensure health care access and limit out-of-pocket costs for receiving care outside of insurance company-established networks?

- Yes** **No** **Other (explain below)**

5. Do you support prohibiting “balance billing” of patients by healthcare providers who seek reimbursement beyond what insurers pay?

- Yes** **No** **Other (explain below)**

6. Do you support “in-sourcing” DC’s Medicaid program so that private insurance corporations aren’t allowed to profit off this vital public program?

- Yes** **No** **Other (explain below)**

7. Are you in favor of a publicly administered, state-based, single-payer universal health care system and, if so, what steps are you prepared to take to make it a reality in the District of Columbia?

- Yes** **No** **Other (explain below)**

[As mentioned above, I am the only candidate in this race who has substantive experience working in health care, including at the Department of Health and Human Services. For some reason, my opponent insists he has similar experience, but his work history does not substantiate his claims and the agency in which he claims to have worked cannot verify his presence therein.

In other words, I am not a politician giving you talking points, I am a candidate with experience and skills to get the job done. When it comes to state-based health plans, I know how to execute these programs because I helped implement the Affordable Care Act and played a role in drafting the rules that set the stage for DC Health Link to be created. We can expand upon that program and provide care for everyone, not just those in Medicaid, purchasing on the individual market or being covered through an employer, if we elect leaders who truly understand the health care delivery system, not because they say they do, but because they’ve done the work.

I have worked on all of these issues at the federal level, from balance billing and coverage for out-of-network services to limiting executive compensation and profiting off our health care system. I have the skills, the experience, and the knowledge to build on this work at the local level here in DC.]

D: Education:

1. What steps will you take to promote public unionism in DC if, as is expected, the Supreme Court will rule against unions in *Janus vs. AFSCME*?

[If the Supreme Court rules against AFSCME in this case, the ability of unions to collect revenue to defend and bargain on behalf of workers will be undermined, so we as a local government need to be increasingly conscious of the important role that unions play for our workers. Unfortunately, in DC we are already falling short. From requiring that wealthy developers pay living wages to their workers, to requiring that employers adhere to wage theft laws, to requiring that our city government bargain in good faith with our teachers, first responders, and other workers, there are things we should be doing better right now, but with a DC Council that has been bought and paid for by corporate donors and special interests, we're falling short. That ends with me. When I'm elected, I'll be working for my neighbors, and I'll be proud to do it.

As it relates to education specifically, WTU and other unions potentially losing revenue as a result of the Janus case should not change our shared understanding that collective bargaining is good for teachers, and also good for students. If teachers are being asked to do more work, they deserve more support, whether it be through increased pay, increased staff and teacher support in schools, or increased flexibility to carry out training and professional development exercises. The collective bargaining process is where we need to be addressing these important issues.]

2. Do you believe that the students of Washington, DC would be better served if the District ended Mayoral control of schools and educational policies were once again the purview of an elected School Board?

Yes

No

other (explain below)

[I have spent a lot of time talking to teachers and parents about this issue, and believe we should consider moving toward this institutional change while being very deliberate and conscious of the issues that must be addressed as part of this process so we do not repeat mistakes made by other cities, and find ourselves with shortcomings or scandals of a different kind.

Education experts have studied and debated the structure of public education in our cities, specifically as it relates to whether governance by a school board or Mayoral control leads to the best results for students and accountability to officials. Some suggest that the school board model leads to more access and accountability within communities, though studies also show that turnout in urban school board races is

often about a third of what it is for a Mayoral race, which means fewer voices are deciding who will lead our schools, and wealthy stakeholders are more easily able to influence outcomes. A recent school board election cycle in Los Angeles attracted tens of millions of dollars in campaign contributions from educational interests, which made the issues, and the money, increasingly difficult to track.

However, I would like to see DC have this conversation, because the public does not currently have full faith in our current governance model, with good reason. If we can implement a school board model that protects our elections from the influence of national stakeholders that have spent substantial money to elect school board candidates in other cities across the nation, I would support doing so in order to increase accountability at the neighborhood level, which is currently lacking. Many experts believe that Mayoral control allows for a level of transparency and accountability in a way that a more disparate school board system with high turnover cannot, which is why large cities throughout the nation have been transitioning to a Mayoral control model over the last ten to twenty years, but the recent scandals in DC have eroded public trust to such a degree that true reforms are necessary. We should be able to subject a school board to the same transparency and oversight requirements we expect of the Mayor.]

3. Do you believe the Washington Teachers' Union and DCPS should have the right to collectively bargain on teacher evaluation standards and procedures? If so, what steps will you take to achieve this goal?

Yes

No

other (explain below)

[If employment decisions are being made on the basis of testing and other evaluation standards, they should of course be subject to collective bargaining. We have seen in recent years teachers being improperly terminated because their scores and evaluations were improperly calculated and considered, and these teachers found themselves with limited immediate recourse. So, obviously, the current structure isn't working. Teachers understand what measures and tests are an accurate reflection of teacher performance, particularly as it relates to whether standardized and adaptive testing systems are accurately capturing student outcomes and improvement rates. They deserve a voice in discussions that seek to use these tools as measures of evaluation for teachers.]

4. DCPS has one of the highest teacher turn-over rates in the nation. What would you do to address this problem?

[We start by valuing our teachers, and this includes paying them the salaries and giving them the support in the classroom that they deserve. DC is spending less on schools in real dollars today than ten years ago. It's impacted the quality of our schools, and it has also made it incredibly difficult for us to attract and retain talented teachers.]

I believe if we commit to treating our teachers fairly, and giving them the wages, resources and support they deserve, we can fix our turnover problem. I am a former teacher, and I taught in a very difficult setting. I didn't do it to get rich, I did it because it mattered. I believe those values are at the core of every educator in our school system. A funding system that supports all of our teachers and students, and provides resources for special education and language access services that are dedicated, mandatory, and sufficient to meet the needs of all students, will provide teachers with the opportunity to be successful in their classrooms, for all of their students. I truly believe that is all they are looking for.]

5. How are you going to help guarantee transparency in the DCPS budgeting process to make sure that funds earmarked for Title I programs and at-risk programs are used as intended?

[The practice of taking funds from at-risk programs and using them to cover shortages in the general fund needs to end. It's bad for our teachers, and it's harming our most vulnerable student populations. Funding for Title 1 and at-risk programs needs to be dedicated, mandatory, and not available to be used to cover other expenses. Transparency is one way to start to make sure that happens.

Government transparency starts with a commitment from elected officials to be transparent. Everyone on the DC Council has a fundamental obligation to make information accessible to the people of our city, and they are falling short. Transparency in the budgeting process starts by holding hearings, meetings and forums at times and in places where parents and teachers can participate and testify. I know few parents, and no teachers, who are able to leave work in order to testify or participate in a budget forum or hearing held in the middle of the day. It's incumbent on the DC Council to make sure important meetings are held at times where everyone can be heard, even if it means holding hearings at night or on weekends. Our city council is one of the highest-paid in the nation, so it seems perfectly reasonable to make that request of its members. We should be working as a community to appropriate dedicated dollars to programs, and hold appointees and staff in the Mayor's office accountable for spending the money and carrying out the programs as our community expects, and our laws require.]

6. The achievement gap in DC between low income students and their more affluent peers is 38 times the national average.

- What do you believe are the causes of the achievement gap?

[I was recently asked by a Charles Allen supporter what I would say to parents of well-achieving students who feel their children do not receive attention from their public school teachers because they are too focused on assisting low-performing classmates. My response was to reject the premise of the question, because I believe strongly that it is our shared responsibility to lift all children in our community and provide everyone with an opportunity to succeed.

Like the teachers I've met on this campaign, I strongly believe that all children can learn. The solution to closing our achievement gap does not begin and end at the door of our schools, which is why our teachers should not be evaluated on the basis of such gaps in their classroom, or blamed for being unable to singlehandedly close them. Unfortunately, our city is home to some of the worst racial and economic disparities in the nation. Many of our students in DC face some of the same socioeconomic and behavioral challenges I observed in my students when I taught in the Peace Corps. In my community, Ward 6, we live among some of the wealthiest people in the city, as well as some of the poorest. Our low-income children face health disparities, food insecurity, undiagnosed medical conditions, unstable housing, and many other challenges that our high-performing students never need to think about. I have spent substantial time meeting with our low-income neighbors and learning about their lives; many of our low-income children live with no access to internet, books or school supplies at home, lack a space at home to concentrate on homework, and they are often insufficiently fed, making it even more difficult to concentrate or get a good night of sleep. Many students come to school having experienced trauma or prolonged periods of toxic stress. We have learned from brain science that when students are in a heightened sense of stress response, it is incredibly difficult for students to learn. Unfortunately, they tell me they have not seen or heard from their current councilmember over the past four years, so they do not expect his votes to reflect an understanding of the hurdles they face.]

- What will you do to address this problem?

[Education philosopher Nel Noddings said, “there is nothing quite so unequal as sameness in curriculum and pedagogy,” and I couldn't agree more. Each student learns at their own pace, in their own way, and should be able to demonstrate what they have learned in more ways than a standardized test. Personalized learning using adaptive technology that provides teachers with real-time data on how individual students are progressing is a promising approach to closing the achievement gap. In blended learning classrooms, teachers are able to use the data collected almost immediately to provide targeted instruction to individual students or small groups.

We give our children a fair chance to succeed when we begin to prioritize supporting them both in the classroom and at home, by doing more to provide access to safe, stable, affordable housing, food and healthcare. Unfortunately, our current councilmember has had countless opportunities to begin to address these issues, but instead chose to vote in favor of using our budget surplus to cut the DC corporate tax rate and slash the estate tax, policies that ultimately caused the disparities in our city to expand, not close. The

consequences of these immoral decisions are seen throughout our city, including in our classrooms. We cannot close our achievement gap simply by asking teachers to do more, or changing our curriculum or test structure. We begin to close our achievement gap – and our wage gap, our housing gap, our health and wellness gaps – by passing laws and budgets that reflect a shared empathy and compassion for those around us, and a genuine interest in seeing everyone succeed.]

7. The DCMR Title 5 states that principals and assistant principals serve one year without tenure in the position. Retention and reappointment shall be at the discretion of the Chancellor. Principals and Assistant Principals have no due process rights resulting in a high turnover of school administrators. How would you propose building continuity of leadership in the face of this situation?

[A period of time before which an administrator is given tenure is a policy that has worked elsewhere, and is built on sound policy. We do want to understand whether an administrator is the appropriate fit for a position before committing to them long term. However, decisions about retention and reappointment must be made based on merit, not based on politics, friendships or connections. In order to ensure that is taking place, we need to proactively develop a fair set of measurable standards by which an administrator will be evaluated, and they must be tailored to the school and the circumstances within which the administrator will be working. If this work is done proactively and collaboratively, with unions and the city committing to outline a set of clear, reasonable standards, and an appeals and arbitration process that is accessible, fair and objective, I believe we can reach a place where Principals and Assistant Principals are able to be confident that they will be evaluated on their work, within the context in which it is being performed, and decisions will be made based on merit.]

E: Accountability/Economic Development: (Please answer by checking the box)

Short-term rental companies like, Airbnb, have grown exponentially in the last few years. In order to protect our neighborhoods and communities from commercial operators who convert valuable housing into de facto hotels, Councilmember Kenyan McDuffie introduced the *Short-term Rental Regulation and Affordable Housing Protection Act of 2017*. This bill will 1) limit short-term rentals to primary residences, 2) remove the incentive to operate commercially by putting a cap on the amount of days a host can rent their home while not present, and 3) hold hosting platforms accountable.

1. Will you vote in support of this bill?

Yes

No

2. Late last year, a Council committee held a hearing on noise complaints. It was evident from this hearing that the vast majority of the complaints should be addressed

through better enforcement of the existing Noise Control Act. Unfortunately, some have proposed solving their noise concerns with draconian legislation that would limit the exercise of free speech in the District. Do you promise to defend the Noise Control Act, which provides critical protections for residents and visitors seeking to exercise their free speech rights in the District of Columbia?

Yes

No

3. Would you be willing to support DC legislation that would require any and all presenters, promoters, vendors, “Events DC”, et al doing any form of for-profit theatrical presentation, show or concert on City property or on property controlled by the City to pay all of their employees an area-standard wage, provide health care coverage and access to job training in the Technical Entertainment Industry?

Yes

No

4. Congress extended the Abolishment Act (D.C. Code §§ 1-624.08 et seq.), effectively allowing the DC government to define the procedures governing any RIF initiated by an agency head, by limiting the procedures to which an aggrieved employee is entitled, and rendering those procedures nonnegotiable. Although this was a misguided effort to help DC government reduce costs, agency heads exploited this Act, often using it as a means to rid their agencies of unpopular employees. The use of such improperly targeted RIF’s is an abuse of authority and does not serve the interests of the District. DC workers covered by a collective bargaining agreement have been unfairly deprived of any meaningful opportunity to assert the rights that they were intended to have under the District of Columbia Comprehensive Merit Personnel Act.

Will you support legislation to repeal provisions of the Abolishment Act that override collective bargaining agreements?

Yes

No

5. Should DC government be able to override collective bargaining agreement provisions regarding RIFs?

Yes

No

The Comprehensive Merit Personnel Act of 1974 (CMPA) establishes the right of DC government employees to form unions if they so desire, and sets out how representation elections will be held, how collective bargaining will be conducted, and how disputes will be resolved.

6. Some ES employees (paraprofessionals) work only 10 months out of 12. Would you support legislation to allow these workers to receive unemployment services during the summer months when they are deemed as officially being laid off employees?

Yes

No

7. Will you vote to uphold the provisions of the CMPA if they are challenged in any way which reduces workers' rights?

Yes

No

Noncompliance with wage and worker protection laws persists at a high level around the country. A 2008 survey found that 68% of people working low-wage jobs in large cities experience wage theft every week, losing about 15% of their earnings. When our laws regarding the minimum wage, overtime, wage theft, and paid sick leave are violated, workers and their families face real and dire consequences. They suffer increased poverty rates and are more likely to rely on public assistance, straining safety net programs and hindering workers' ability to improve their economic futures. But the harms of wage theft also extend beyond its immediate victims, reducing taxable income and exerting downward pressure on the wages of all workers in affected industries. Law-abiding business owners are also harmed as their competitors unlawfully trim labor costs*.

8. What steps will you take toward eliminating all forms of wage theft and fostering an environment of worker protections throughout the District of Columbia?

[One reason I am running for DC Council in Ward 6 is because I have met too many workers who are experiencing wage theft, and because their employers are run by men who have donated to Charles Allen, Mr. Allen has turned a blind eye to these issues in our community. He may talk as though he wishes to protect workers, but the reality is he has not acted – it is not his job to feign outrage at the lack of worker protections, it is his job to fix the lack of worker protections. Since he takes tens of thousands of dollars in campaign contributions from the very people who own the companies committing wage theft, he is not positioned to take action. It's unfortunate.

While wage theft is pervasive and highly damaging, there is some good news: the problem is not unassailable. To be most effective, anti-wage theft laws must be meaningfully and effectively enforced, and must be accompanied by other legal provisions that empower victims to speak up against their abuse, such as strong anti-retaliation laws. Unlike my opponent, I am not beholden to any corporate or business interests, so when I'm elected, wage theft will be dealt with swiftly and forcefully. We will start by enforcing existing laws. DC has some of the strongest labor laws in the nation, but when we elect a DC Council filled with members who are so closely aligned with the business community, it should be no surprise that they are not enforced.

We know that the Department of Employment Services receives a constant stream of labor law complaints, and that the Office of the Attorney General does not have the funds nor the investigators to keep pace. As a result, unscrupulous employers take advantage of workers, fail to comply with local hiring laws, and, in some instances, point fingers at competitors in an effort to distract overextended investigators and

divert attention from their own violations. DC must invest more in oversight and investigations to protect our workers, especially as the city's many development projects surge ahead.

It's a matter of record that our Ward 6 Council Member has taken tens of thousands of dollars in campaign donations from developer interests. It's no coincidence that Ward 6 is home to the most pervasive and expansive development projects in the city. The Wharf is a glaring example: DC gave \$300 million in subsidies to commercial developers without ensuring that their projects provided good-quality jobs that pay a living wage to DC residents. As a taxpayer, I am appalled by leaders who vote to subsidize such significant projects without first determining whether financial support was necessary, and whether workers will be protected. Moreover, the DC Council allowed the Wharf developer to meet only 10 percent of affordability standards for newly built housing units, down from the 30-percent standard initially set. Labor unions and locals are furious at this boondoggle, and they should be.

According to the DC Fiscal Policy Institute, union agreements would have resulted in more than \$13.2 million in higher earnings for construction workers, hotel workers, and office cleaners. The workers would also have received healthcare and retirement benefits. Instead, my opponent appeased corporate interests and failed to ensure that every dollar of taxpayer money is spent wisely. At a time when corporate greed is pervasive, and when our confidence in the integrity of our government institutions and elected officials is low, we deserve better. It starts by electing leaders who haven't been bought and paid for.]

9. Will you work with community groups, city administration and others to support proven programs that combat wage theft: Community engagement in language access programs; Public Education Partnerships; the Development of Community Allies to assist with third party enforcement?

Yes

No

10. Will you increase funding in the departments and programs that have proven to ensure that workers are paid correctly and made aware of their rights under the law, such as: increased funding in DOES for investigators, funding for community members who are third party enforcers; increased penalties for employers who violate the laws and; funding for a robust Public Awareness and Accountability Program?

Yes

No

12. Will you provide the funding to implement the Procurement Integrity, Transparency, and Accountability Amendment Act of 2016, which requires that city contracts above \$75 million have a Project-Labor Agreement?

Yes

No

other (explain below)

13. Income and racial inequality are growing in DC. What would you do to address that?

[Closing our income and racial disparities starts with electing people who represent everyone in our community. My opponent is a legacy councilmember, he went to the same high school as his predecessor, and got elected off the same donor list. When we allow that dynamic to exist in our politics, we are necessarily allowing leaders to ignore substantial portions of our population. I see that every single day when I am out canvassing, I meet voters who tell me they've never seen Charles Allen, even though he's been working on the DC Council for twelve years. That's unacceptable, and it stops with me.

When we elect leaders who represent all people, and lead with empathy, we can begin to enact policies that work for our most vulnerable neighbors. In 2017, Mr. Allen voted to cut the corporate tax rate and slash the estate tax, while voting down new funding for housing and expansion of social services for vulnerable residents. It should come as no surprise that the income and racial disparities have grown over the past four years under his leadership.

I believe our community has a shared set of progressive values that demand we lift our neighbors up, we don't leave them behind. We are a community that supports our neighbors. We don't change our laws in order to force them out of their homes, and we don't turn a blind eye when employers are not hiring local and are choosing not to treat their workers fairly, knowing they can get away with it.

When I am elected, I will vote in the interests of our neighbors, not our city's corporate interests. I will reverse the tax cuts for the ultra-wealthy that Mr. Allen voted in favor of, and I will redirect that money to address the growing inequities in the housing, education, health care and job training services offered by our city. I will work to make sure everyone who calls Ward 6 home has access to a high-quality education, a safe, stable home, a job that pays a living wage, and a chance at upward mobility. I believe these are fundamental human rights, not privileges reserved for wealthy campaign donors.

Elections have consequences, and votes reflect values. Too many of the votes Mr. Allen has taken do not reflect the values of our community, and instead reflect the interests of the wealthy donors who bought his vote. It is going to force countless longtime residents out of our communities and increase the rapid pace of displacement already occurring in our Ward.]

F: Transportation: (Please provide your response on a separate sheet).

1. Do you believe that any privatization of public transit is acceptable for the improvement of service at WMATA, DC Streetcar or DC Circulator? If so, please explain.

Yes

No

other (explain below)

2. In the 2018 legislative session in Maryland, ATU Local 689 aggressively pursued legislation to see assaults on transit workers charged as an automatic felony. Will you work to make sure D.C. joins Maryland in raising the penalty of assaults on transit employees?

Yes

No

1. CLASS I / Freight & Passenger Railroad – Safety & Security

Union Station is the second busiest station in the national Amtrak network with five million annual passengers. MARC, and Virginia Railroad Express (VRE) transport daily 50,000 commuters and visitors to the District of Columbia. The combined ridership for Amtrak, MARC, and VRE is expected to increase from 14 million – 34 million by 2040.

Freight railroad traffic through the District of Columbia is projected to increase by 57% to 48 daily double-stacked freight trains from the Ports of Norfolk, Charleston, Jacksonville, and Miami.

Wards 4,5,6,7 host the railroad corridors with a combined population of 297,747 residents equaling forty-four (44%) percent of the total population. Our 700,000 population is projected to increase by 30% by 2040. Many of these new residents will live and work in the old and new communities adjacent to railroad corridors.

The past two years the District of Columbia has experienced major railroad incidents:

- May 2016 - 170 car CSX train freight train derailed in Ward 5 traveling through the District of Columbia on the CSX Capital Sub-Division from Cumberland, Maryland to Hamlet, North Carolina. Fourteen cars derailed with seven tanker cars containing sodium hydroxide, ethanol, and calcium chloride leaking its contents.
- June 2017 – Two CSX Transportation employees were struck and killed by a southbound Amtrak Train No. 175 north of Union Station in the Ivy City.

In 2017, the Council approved the Rail Safety and Security Amendment Act (D.C. Law 21-254) authorizing the creation of an Emergency Response and Rail Safety Division within the Department of Energy and the Environment (DOEE). It also would establish of a Railroad Advisory Board.

2. In FY 2018 budget, the Council did not appropriate any funding to establish the State Rail Safety Office. Would you support full funding to establish the Rail Safety Office in the FY 2019 budget?

Yes

No

other (explain below)

3. Would you support an amendment to D.C. Law 21-254 “Rail Safety and Security Amendment Act” authorizing the DOEE to assess penalties and fines for safety or security violations on the railroads operating in the District of Columbia?

Yes

No

other (explain below)

G. Utility Issues: (Please provide your response on a separate sheet)

I. DC Water – Clean River Impervious Area Charge (CRIAC) Fee

Over past 30 years, the Metropolitan Washington Council / AFL-CIO has opposed policies that denied reasonable, fair, and equitable utility rates to District of Columbia residents.

It is our view the (Clean Rivers Impervious Area Charge) CRIAC being imposed on ratepayers by DC Water is of these policies. The CRIAC is onerous and undermines public support for Clean River Projects to improve storm water management and the Anacostia River.

More importantly, the CRIAC fee disproportionately affects senior citizens, working families, and long-term homeowners. It is also contributing to accelerated gentrification and the de-stabilization of many legacy neighborhoods and communities. The CRIAC fee is making the District of Columbia unaffordable for its many public servants and residents. DC Water must develop a plan to broaden its rate base, to include assessments on the District of Columbia and Federal Governments.

The Metropolitan Washington Council Labor Council is committed to reducing the financial burden of the CRIAC charges and a more equitable formula to fund restoration and preservation of the Anacostia River.

If elected to the Council of the District of Columbia, will you commit to:

14. Do you support efforts to reduce and expand the distribution of CRIAC charges across rate groups?

- Yes** **No** **other (explain below)**

15. Do you support greater oversight of DC Water operations and ratemaking? Including requiring Council approvals for all new fees, charges and rate hikes imposed on District of Columbia ratepayers.

- Yes** **No** **other (explain below)**

[Importantly, DC Water lobbyists and board members have donated to the re-election campaign of my opponent. This information is available on the DC Office of Campaign Finance website. In addition, the Chairman of DC Water is his former boss, hometown family friend, and fellow high school alumni who helped him get elected in the first place. This should give you a sense of where he will stand on these issues if he is re-elected. I, on the other hand, have not been bought, and do not owe anyone at DC Water any favors. You can count on me to take them on when it's necessary.]

H. Retail/Budget

1. Do you support Fair Scheduling legislation to require employers to give retail and restaurant workers their weekly work schedules at least two weeks in advance, and requires employers to offer part-time workers more hours when a fellow employee leaves, rather than hiring additional employees?

Yes

No

other (explain below)

[I fully support Fair Scheduling legislation. It's important to note that my opponent, Charles Allen, opposes it firmly because he believes it is too burdensome for employers. I'm proud to stand in support of workers on this critical issue, and it's unfortunate that my opponent disagrees with us.

It's incredibly disappointing that the Council bowed to business interests and continues to table this important legislation. In another example of our Council working for business interests rather than its people, a bill supported by labor and consumer organizations across the city has been cast aside by our DC Council because they have placed the lobbying efforts of the DC Chamber and other businesses over the interests of our neighbors.

The legislation is critical because it would primarily support the most economically vulnerable workers in our city. Requiring employers to provide hours to current employees before bringing on new staff would allow many workers to reach full-time status, which would trigger their eligibility for employer-sponsored health insurance. Having worked on Affordable Care Act (ACA) implementation in the Obama administration, I can say with certainty that, in a city where our DC Council seeks to position themselves as champions of the ACA, one of the most important policy changes they could make in order to decrease the rate of uninsured DC workers would be to increase the number of full-time workers. Yet, they refuse to act. This bill is largely about economic certainty and security for low-wage workers, but it is also an example of DC business interests having undue influence in matters related to the health care of DC workers.

Beyond the obvious benefits of additional work hours, advance notice of scheduling and the elimination of 'just-in-time' scheduling would allow workers to schedule childcare when it is needed – and not schedule it when it is not needed. It would also allow more workers to climb the economic ladder by taking evening classes or seeking additional employment should they choose to do so. This is good policy that strengthens our workforce, which is why some companies such as Target have voluntarily adopted a policy where workers receive their work schedules with a minimum of ten days advance notice.]

2. What are your top three priorities for the DC budget?

[My top three priorities for the DC budget are below. Importantly, I would pay for these priorities immediately by repealing the corporate tax cut and the estate tax cut that my opponent voted for last year. In a city in the midst of an affordable housing crisis, with the highest rate of homelessness in the nation per capita, and some of the worst racial and economic disparities in the nation, we do not need to be providing financial relief for the ultra-wealthy at a time when we are leaving so many of our neighbors behind. If we take these steps to begin improving our housing, education and homelessness crises, we can begin to make DC a city that works for everyone who calls it home, not just those fortunate enough to have political access.

- 1) I would provide the funding recommended by housing advocates – approximately \$40 million this year - to make necessary repairs to our public housing system that are creating public health issues for residents. We start to create economic stability and upward mobility for our neighbors by first ensuring that they have safe, stable housing.
- 2) I would immediately move to add mandatory funding to our education budget to fund special education and language access programs. Currently we are funding on a per pupil basis that is far below what is being asked for by teachers, and amounts to less funding in real dollars today than we were providing ten years ago. We should be adequately funding our public education system because it's critical to the ongoing well-being of our neighbors, and our city and we should not be robbing funds from programs that benefit at-risk students in order to fill shortfalls in the general education fund that the DC Council is creating.
- 3) I would move to protect our homeless neighbors by immediately passing and funding the Stoops Act, a bill that my opponent Mr. Allen has been singlehandedly blocking in the Council for the past year even though it has the votes to pass. This bill would provide basic protections against discrimination for our homeless neighbors. I would also adequately fund our shelter system, and move to reverse my opponent's vote to block women and families from having access to private bathrooms in shelters. I would also redirect funds to building housing that is truly affordable, and would seek to redefine the local definition of AMI so our affordable units are priced based on what our community can actually afford.]

Candidate (Please Print Legibly): Lisa Hunter

Signature: *Lisa Hunter* (completed and submitted electronically by Lisa Hunter)

Date: May 6, 2018

Thank you.