

Metropolitan Washington Council AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education (COPE)

2020 District of Columbia Primary Election Candidate Questionnaire

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GENERAL INFORMATION:

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City / County: Washington, DC Zip: 20035

Phone: 202-350-1075 Email: Jordan@JordanForWard2.com

Candidate for: DC Councilmember, Ward 2

Campaign Committee Name and Address: Jordan Grossman for Ward 2, P.O. Box 65528, Washington, DC 20035

Campaign Website: https://JordanForWard2.com

Campaign Manager: Allie Boyer, Allie @Jordan For Ward 2.com

Campaign Treasurer: Jonah Perlin, Jonah Perlin@gmail.com

Does your campaign accept PAC contributions? Yes/No

Previously elected / appointed office:

Office: Term:

- Program Manager, DC Access System, DC Department of Health Care Finance (2018-2019)
- Acting Legislative Director/Deputy Legislative Director, Office of U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar (2017-2018)
- Chief of Staff (Obama Administration Political Appointee), Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2015-2017)
- Law Clerk, Judge Christopher R. Cooper, U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia (2014-2015)
- Special Advisor (Obama Administration Political Appointee), Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Homeland Security (2009-2011)
- Special Assistant, Obama Presidential Transition Team (2008-2009)
- Field Organizer, Obama for America (2008)

SIGNATURE: DATE: 3/3/20

Have you ever received labor's endorsement? Yes/No If Yes, When?

Please return your signed questionnaire by Tuesday, March 3, 2020 to:

David Stephen, MWC Political and Legislative Director, dstephen@dclabor.org
For questions, please email or call: 202-974-8222

Overview:

As the voice of working people across the United States, the Washington Metropolitan Council (MWC), is the heart of the American labor movement.

By uniting labor unions from across the region and mobilizing the local community, the MWC plays a critical role in local, state, and national issues.

The Council's affiliated unions represent over 150,000 area union members across the labor spectrum, from service and hospitality industries, retail sales, and communications to transportation, manufacturing, construction and building trades, and, of course, the public sector at all levels, including DC government.

Our priorities include:

- 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 accountable to ensure that taxpayer dollars serve the public good; and
- Ensuring that workers universal right to organize and to bargain collectively for wages, hours, and conditions of work are maintained and enforced.

CORNERSTONE ISSUES OF LABOR

ALL WORKING PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- A Good Job with Fair Wages
- Quality Health Care
- A Safe Job
- Paid Time Off and Flexible, Predictable Scheduling
- Freedom from Discrimination
- Retire with Dignity
- Fully-Funded Public Education
- Freedom to Join Together
- A Voice in Democracy

Better Wages and Benefits

When people negotiate through collective bargaining, they gain better wages and benefits. Decent raises, predictable schedules, and family-friendly policies do not just happen without working people coming together and advocating for better workplaces.

Workplace Safety

The labor movement has led the charge to protect working people from workplace injury, illness, and death. Working with allies, labor has won strong protections against hazards and stronger rights for workers. Through organizing and collective bargaining, unions have gained robust protections and a real voice in safety and health at the workplace.

Pay equity

In 2016, women in unions made 23 percent higher wages than those not in a union. Moreover, unions have narrowed the gender wage gap to just 6 percent (compared to 16 percent for non-union). In addition, unions are also more likely to have various types of paid leave to balance work and family.¹

Building Power for Working People

Union members work together to negotiate and enforce a contract with management that guarantees things like decent raises, affordable health care, safer workplaces, job security, and a stable schedule.

¹ Economic Policy Institute "Unions help narrow the gender wage gap," Gould, McNicholas April 3, 2017

2020 Candidate Questionnaire

PLEASE BRIEFLY EXPLAIN WHY YOU SEEK LABOR'S ENDORSEMENT:

I have dedicated my life to the values and priorities that underpin the labor movement: ensuring that workers and their families – the backbones of our communities and our economy – can live, work, and retire with dignity. I would be honored to fight alongside the Washington Metropolitan Council for a more just, inclusive, and equitable DC where residents of all genders, races, religions, and ethnicities can find a good job and earn a decent wage, have the security of paid family and medical leave, afford a place to live and raise a family, send their children to high-quality child care and equitably funded public schools, get around on reliable public transportation infrastructure operated by unionized workers, have access to top-flight hospitals and health care in their neighborhoods, live free of discrimination, vote in fair elections, and participate in transparent and ethical government processes.

To me, these fights are inextricably linked with the right to organize and a strong labor movement, which has always put the basic needs of working people and their families front and center. Too often, I hear from Ward 2 voters who feel squeezed in our current economy because their wages just don't match up with the skyrocketing costs of housing, child care, transportation, and student loans. Families shouldn't have to scratch and claw and take on multiple jobs to afford record-high home prices, nearly \$24,000 a year for a safe place for an infant to learn, or simply to get around on our inadequate and underfunded transportation systems. I have seen labor's organizing abilities around these core issues and values firsthand – whether it's ATU Local 689's recent courageous strike to fight the pernicious path of privatization or UFCW Local 400's current work to safeguard pensions and a fair contract for Safeway and Giant workers. Members of the Washington Metropolitan Council have truly walked the walk when it comes to standing up for working people in our region and deserve a true ally in the Ward 2 Councilmember.

In addition to our shared mission and values, labor's skills and member-power would be extraordinarily valuable for our grassroots campaign efforts. We are building a grassroots organization that has the resources and the capacity to take on the wealthy corporate interests that often dominate District government – and that have long supported Jack Evans. One way we are doing so is by participating in the Fair Elections public financing program. To date, we have generated substantial grassroots fundraising support – leading the Ward 2 field by a wide margin in donations overall and from DC residents – without taking any money from corporations or PACs. We are also meeting voters where they are to develop meaningful connections and support. That includes nearly 40 local meet and greets so far – where many attendees have not previously engaged in DC politics but commit to vote, volunteer, and/or host their own event – and engaging new or infrequent voters in ways or at venues that are part of their day-to-day lives. As a result of these strategies, the vast majority of people who have donated to our campaign have never donated to a DC Council candidate before this election cycle.

But a grassroots movement is much bigger than an individual candidate or a fundraising report. Our campaign is proud to have earned the support of several of DC's leading progressive organizations, including the Washington Teachers Union, the DC Working Families Party, 350 DC, and Jews United for Justice (JUFJ) Campaign Fund, and to have received 54 percent of the vote of DC for Democracy members – more than double any other candidate. If we are fortunate enough to earn the support of the Washington Metropolitan Council, it would take our campaign to the next level. If elected, I look forward to working in partnership with constituents and key allies like the Washington Metropolitan Council to craft laws that reflect our shared priorities, build support to get them passed, and conduct rigorous oversight to ensure these laws are implemented as intended to make life better for working people and their families (and not subverted by corporate lobbyists in the regulatory process). With the support of the labor movement and other progressive allies, we hope to execute the most effective grassroots campaign operation Ward 2 has ever seen.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Collective bargaining is the process in which working people, through unions, negotiate contracts with their employers to determine the terms of employment, including pay, benefits, hours, leave, job health and safety policies, ways to balance work and family, and more. Collective bargaining is the heart and soul of the Labor Movement. Collective bargaining is a way to solve workplace problems, and is also the best means for raising wages in America. Indeed, through collective bargaining, working people in unions have higher wages, better benefits and safer workplaces.

Do you support for the District of Columbia (please respond Yes or No):

- Yes The rights of public and private sector workers to organize and have union representation.
- Yes The right to freely exercise workplace rights free from harassment, intimidation and/or delays.
- Yes The right to bargain collectively with a legal obligation on both sides to negotiate in good faith.
- <u>Yes</u> The right to resolve differences in a fair, impartial and timely manner, including a timely resolution to binding arbitration.

Additional Comments or clarification:

RIGHT TO WORK

"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" legislation, actually weakens the rights of working people and dismantles unions. Would you commit to:

Opposing	legislation to bring "Rig	ght to Work"	in DC?	
	<u>√</u> Yes	\Box No	☐Other (explain below)	
Additional	l Comments or clarifica	tion:		
UNION DUES A	AND JANUS V. AFSCI	ME DECISIO	ON	
AFSCME. The rul "agency fees" to t	ling was a devastating b	plow against p r whom they	s single most consequential ruling in <i>Janus</i> bublic-sector unions barring them from app negotiate pay increases and benefits if thos Would you commit to:	olying
non		of union repre	llowing unions to collect a service fee from sentation as long as there are protections for	
	√ Yes	\Box No	□Other (explain below)	
Additional	l Comments or clarifica	tion:		

HEALTHCARE WORKERS & ACCESS

Universal Health Services Inc. (UHS) hospital (background):

Mayor Muriel Bowser's administration has been negotiating with UHS to be the operator of the new hospital in Ward 8. The deal with UHS is expected to be announced to the public early this year.

Community groups, labor groups, and residents of Wards 7 and 8 have serious concerns about UHS as a bad actor because the company puts profits over patients.

- George Washington University Hospital has just sued UHS because "Instead of investing" in GWU's mission, "UHS has paid itself" with "outsized dividends from artificially inflated, excess profits."
- UHS was found to violate labor law by the National Labor Relations Board in 2019. The Court found they attempted to illegally bust the union at George Washington University Hospital.
- A \$127 million judgment was levied against UHS by the Department of Justice after being sued for defrauding Medicare and Medicaid services.
- UHS understaffs its facilities across multiple states, putting patients and workers at risk.
- UHS refuses to create an independent committee to protect rights and health of patients and workers. This secrecy threatens patients' health and workers' jobs.
- UHS does not have plans to build a level-1 trauma center nor a high-risk obstetrics unit or neonatal intensive care unit (NICU), despite great need East of the River.
- UHS and Mayor Bowser's office will not give any guarantees that staff from UMC will have jobs at the new hospital. The deal has no plan for these devoted caregivers, some of whom have worked at the hospital and lived in the community for decades.

Community and labor groups have been left out of this process and the deal has been secretive and rushed, thus leading to a lack of critical services and labor protections. This lack of services and protections will affect the whole city. The labor community believes that DC residents deserve a world-class hospital East of the River. Will you support efforts to:

<u>Yes</u>	Require the new	hospital to	o hire the	workers	from	UMC:	in their	current	position	with the	heir (current
	benefits and unio	on represe	ntation.									

<u>Yes</u> Guarantee neutrality for workers at the new medical facility to organize.

Yes Ensure high level quality of services needed for the Ward 7 and 8 communities including high-risk obstetrics and a minimum Level 2 trauma unit.

 $^{^2}$ GWU sues corporate hospital partner, leaving fate of Southeast project uncertain, Washington Post, Peter Jamison, Dec. 10, 2019

Additional Comments or clarification:

We must take action to remedy the unacceptable facts that women cannot currently deliver babies in a hospital East of the River, DC has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the country, and three-fourths of the mothers who die due to pregnancy or childbirth complications in our city are black. Trauma victims in Wards 7 and 8 need and deserve access to a top-notch health care facility, with a minimum Level 2 trauma unit, staffed by the devoted caregivers who have worked in the community for years — especially when every minute counts and getting to hospitals in Northwest can take 30 minutes or more.

EDUCATION:

Affiliates of the MWC represent teachers, bus drivers and other school related personnel in DCPS. Despite an increase in Mayor Bowser's education budget for FY2020, 20 public schools, including 17 schools in Wards 7 and 8, saw significant budget cuts for the current school year.

Overall funding for DCPS has not kept up with rising costs, leading to cuts in many schools. Additionally, the Labor Movement believes that regardless of where a student attends school, they are entitled to the same rights as a student, including transparency and adherence to local laws. To serve the best interest of education in the District, will you commit to:

	\Box Yes	\Box No	✓ Other (explain be	elow)	
	d you support ending Mayoral control of urview of an elected School Board?	f schools and	educational policies a	nd placing them i	n
Yes	Ensuring that all Local Education Age transparency laws.	encies (LEA) a	are subject to FOIA, C	Open Meetings and	d
Yes	Supporting the right of all public sector teacher evaluation standards and process.		DCPS to collectively	bargain on	
Yes_	Working with the community and laborated student safety including enforcing trau	-	•		
Yes_	Working with teachers through their use gap of schools in lower-income comm		ment methods to close	e the opportunity	
Yes	Proving school that receive a net flow resources.	of students th	roughout the school y	ear additional	
Yes_	= 0	of students th	roughout the school y	ear additiona	1

Additional Comments or clarification:

While I very much admire several of the impressive leaders currently serving on the DC State Board of Education, I do not believe that the primary solution to our education challenges involves another reorganization of the various bodies involved in public education in the District of Columbia, but rather better policies and coordination, enhanced and more equitable funding, and stronger oversight and transparency. Too often, proposals for new entities or reorganizing existing entities divert focus and attention from the vital nuts and bolts work of addressing and improving the core issues and challenges we face.

If elected, I will fight for equity for our schools – including through rigorous oversight and equitable funding. As the DC Fiscal Policy Institute and others have made clear, funding for DC Public Schools is inadequate and inequitable. In violation of DC law, several schools have faced budget cuts of 5 percent or more, and schools in low-income, primarily black neighborhoods have been disproportionately affected. Moreover, these schools are far less likely to benefit from outside sources of funding that other schools receive. At the same time, the DC Auditor and others have found that funds intended for at-risk students are being inappropriately redirected to plug unrelated budget shortfalls. This must change: our DCPS schools deserve predictable, consistent, and equitable funding across the board to ensure teachers have the resources necessary to do their jobs and meet the needs of all of their students.

I also believe that we must stop putting the burden addressing so many of our challenges in the District – from poverty to gun violence to a lack of equitable transportation options – on the shoulders of teachers and schools. We must take concrete action on these structural issues by addressing gun violence and trauma in students' lives, preserving and producing affordable housing for teachers and students, and making it possible for children to get to and from school safely, reliably, and quickly. We also must recognize that DC Public Schools' extraordinary teachers are one of our most important resources. DCPS teachers are regularly required to go above and beyond their core duties to address these challenges that extend far beyond the classroom. We must provide our teachers with adequate resources and do more to retain them.

ACCOUNTABILITY/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

Entertainment

Accidents in the event/entertainment industry are far too common. Thankfully you would have to go back in time over 20 years to the last fatal accident in Washington DC when a lighting supervisor working for upstaging fell 90 feet from the catwalk of the DC Armory and died the night before a Marilyn Manson concert, but it has happened, and without regulation it could happen again. Look at what happened to the deputy Mayor this past March, a speaker falling on a person attending a rally should never happen. Unfortunately, accidents like that go un-reported far too often. This is a public safety issue that needs to be taken seriously.

Would you be willing to support DC legislation that would amend <u>Title 47, Chapter 18 of the District of Columbia Official Code</u> to ensure:

- 1) that a person or party responsible for the staging and operation of a special event in the District holds a basic business license and an Entertainment endorsement to such license and
- 2) to establish a safety qualification program for technicians employed in the staging of special events by requiring that at least one member of the staging crew hold a rigger's certification issued by the Entertainment Technician Certification Program, and that all persons employed in such operations complete a minimum safety training course (OSHA-10) prior to working on the event?

\checkmark Yes	No
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Additional Comments or clarification:

Wage Theft

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.

Will you work with comm proven programs that com		y administration and other advocates to support
<u>✓</u> Yes	□ No	
to ensure that workers are	paid correctly, ing for community	in funding in the departments and programs that work including the Department of Employee Services (DOES) members who are third party enforcers, and a robust am?

Additional Comments or clarification:

Many members of the DC Council too often treat passing a law or holding a press conference as the end of the process, rather than the beginning. The way that the Council passed and trumpeted alternative legislation to Initiative 77 that would supposedly help tipped workers, and then failed to actually fund and implement it, is a vivid example of this problem.

As Ward 2's councilmember, I would fight for funding and implementation of provisions like these to combat wage theft and sexual harassment, as well as proactive oversight of other existing worker protection laws, from my first day on the job. As DC Jobs with Justice has noted, DC "has some of the strongest labor laws on the books," including the Wage Theft Prevention Amendment Act. Yet the DC Just Pay Coalition has found "wage theft remains pervasive" in DC and the Department of Employment Services "is not using the full extent of the law to ensure workers are fully paid" or effectively deterring bad faith employers "from being out of compliance with this or other labor laws." I'm deeply concerned about similarly lackluster implementation and enforcement of the Universal Paid Leave Amendment Act, particularly in light of recently proposed regulations that would inappropriately narrow the number of workers who could receive benefits. The Council must take explicit and proactive action to ensure the labor and sexual harassment protections it has passed into law are actually being put to their intended use to improve the lives of workers in the District. If they aren't, the DC Auditor or other reviewing bodies should provide specific recommendations to the Council for how to make sure they do.

Conducting rigorous oversight to ensure that laws and protections on the books actually make a difference in the day-to-day lives of residents has been an integral part of my career in public service over the past decade, including working in DC's Medicaid agency, DC's federal trial court, the U.S. Senate, and two different federal agencies. In fact, I have learned how effective oversight can simultaneously protect residents and save money. For example, I was awarded the Department of Justice Civil Division's Perseverance Award for my work during the Obama Administration on an investigation that not only resulted in a strong, enforceable corporate integrity agreement to protect patient safety but also returned nearly \$155 million to taxpayers. Similarly, my oversight efforts when I worked in the U.S. Senate not only helped protect health care coverage for low-income people benefitting from a little-known provision of the Affordable Care Act, it also forced the Trump Administration to provide millions of dollars to the states choosing to use it.

Transportation: (Please provide your response on a separate sheet). **Transit Worker Assaults** There are dozens of incidents where bus and train operators, as well as station managers, have been spat on, slapped, tased, stabbed, and even doused with urine. Transit worker assaults are not only a danger to the workers, but also to the riding public, who are also placed in harm's way when these incidents occur. Following the urine-dousing incident on a Metro bus operator in 2018, unions began calling on the respective legislatures of District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia to increase the penalties for transit assaults. Will you work to ensure the District of Columbia raises the penalty of assaults on transit employees? □ Yes \square No The safety of bus operators should be a top priority. I support strengthening protections for these essential public servants who are the backbone of our region's transit system. **Privatization** Will you support efforts by transit workers in preventing privatization of future services at WMATA? \square No ✓ Yes Likewise, will you support efforts by to prevent privatization of future services by the District government at the DC Streetcar and DC Circulator? **√** Yes \square No Uber and Lyft represent one of the largest threats to public transit in the country. Do you support laws, similar to AB5 in California or New York City's 2019 Rideshare Law, to clarify the rights of rideshare workers? \square No ✓ Yes Additional Comments or clarification:

Inherently governmental services should be performed by public servants. In my career in DC government and in all three branches of the federal government, I have seen over and over again the flaws and drawbacks of privatizing such government services. Often, the only true beneficiary of these privatization schemes are the wealthy corporations who charge far higher rates for these services while busting unions and slashing wages and benefits for the workers on the frontlines.

ATU Local 689 has shone a bright line on exactly this pernicious trend through the courageous Cinder Bed Bus Garage strike, but this practice extends throughout government agencies and services. Our political leaders ought to recognize and budget for the value of full-time, unionized government employees performing government services rather than cutting corners or using privatization gimmicks that rarely if ever truly improve performance or efficiency.

Freight Crew Size Legislation

The District of Columbia is a major gateway for north/south and east/west freight railroad traffic. By 2040, freight railroad traffic is projected to triple from 15 to 48 daily freight trains.

Today, the average freight train is 1.5 - 2 miles long and three (3) stories tall. The size, length, and commodities, including hazardous material transported by these freight trains, posse significant public safety risks for the communities adjacent to the rail corridors.

Currently, freight trains in the United States are operated with a minimum of two crew members: locomotive engineer and conductor. The coordinated efforts of the crew ensure the safe movement of the freight train. In the event of an accident or incident, the crew the coordinates immediate assistance and provide critical information to fire and emergency responders.

The freight railroad industry based on new technology and operating paradigm are seeking to reduce the crew size to just the locomotive engineer.

A reduction of the crew to only a locomotive engineer would create a major public safety risk for the District of Columbia. Locomotive engineers and conductors each have different specific responsibilities they perform to ensure the safe movement of a freight train.

More importantly, the major functions for safely moving a freight train can't be performed by a single crew member.

Single-man railroad operations have been proven unsafe and directly contribute to several horrific accidents, including the 2013 disaster in Lac Megantic, Quebec - Canada.

Seven (7) states: California, Illinois, Colorado, Nevada, Wisconsin, Arizona, and West Virginia, have enacted legislation requiring a minimum two-persons crew on all freight railroad trains.

QUESTION:

To protect the communities adjacent to our rail corridors, would you support legislation requiring a minimum two-person crew on all freight rail trains operated in the District of Columbia?

Additional Comments or clarification:

Rail Safety Inspections and Oversight

In 2016, D.C. Law 21-254 authorized the creation of the Emergency Response and Rail Safety Division (ERRSD) within the Department of Energy and Environment. ERRSD is the State Rail Safety Office responsible for monitoring and overseeing all railroad activity in the District of Columbia. ERRSD is comprised of an Associate Director and Rail Safety Inspectors trained in specific railroad disciplines. Unfortunately, ERRSD has been underfunded each fiscal year since it's creation.

omercanacety, Erected has e		r risear year since it is ereation	•
QUESTION 1.			
Would you support full fund	ing for ERRSD in the	FY 2021 and future budgets?	
✓ Yes	□NO	□ OTHER	
QUESTION 2.			
• • •	olumbia to assess pena	-254: "Rail Safety and Securitalties and fines for safety and s	•
✓ Yes	□ NO	□ OTHER	
Additional Comments or c	clarification:		
I certify that the responses in consideration by the MWC.	this questionnaire are	e mine and reflect my political	positions for
SIGNATURE:	$(\varphi$		DATE: <u>3/3/2020</u>
Candidate (Please Print Legi	bly): Jordan Grossm	an	
Thank you.			