



## 2018 Political Candidate Questionnaire

Dear Candidate:

The DC Chapter of the Sierra Club intends to make endorsements in the upcoming primary election. To inform our decisions, we would like to ask you a few questions. The questions are yes or no, but if you would like to elaborate on any response, feel free to do so. We ask that you return the questionnaire by Friday April 6. Please email the questionnaire responses to me at [rodeffer@gmail.com](mailto:rodeffer@gmail.com). If you have any questions, email me or call me at 202-487-5438. Once we have received your questionnaire, we may contact you for a personal interview to discuss your campaign and the environmental issues facing the District. Thank you for taking time out of your busy campaign schedule to complete the questionnaire.

Sincerely,

Mark Rodeffer  
Chair, DC Chapter, Sierra Club

### **Ready for 100**

More than two-thirds of global greenhouse gas emissions are from burning fossil fuels. To remain below a 1.5 degree Celsius increase from pre-industrial temperatures to avoid the worst effects of climate change, we must move to a fully decarbonized energy sector by 2050. Achieving 100 percent of our energy from renewable sources is affordable with today's technologies, and continued innovation will reduce costs even more. The District's Renewable Portfolio Standard requires 50 percent of our electricity to be derived from renewables by

2032. To combat the devastating effects of climate change, the District must expand our use of clean energy to 100 percent by 2050.

Q: Will you support the District of Columbia officially setting the goal of 100 percent clean energy by 2050?

Yes  No

### **Carbon Pricing**

Putting a price on carbon emissions is one of the most straightforward and cost-effective ways to fight climate change. The DC Sierra Club is part of the “Put a Price on It” coalition that has proposed levying an increasing fee on carbon emissions and rebating most of the money back to residents of the District of Columbia, with additional support to low-income residents. The remainder of the money raised from the fee would fund strategic investments to accelerate DC’s transition to a clean energy economy in a way that is just and equitable. This market-based approach would provide financial incentives for using clean energy and financial disincentives for dirty energy.

Q: Will you support legislation to establish a carbon fee and rebate program in DC?

Yes  No

**Yes. For the past year I’ve been working with members of the coalition and recently drafted and introduced a resolution in my capacity as an Advisory Neighborhood Commissioner and Chair of ANC1A to support the creation of a carbon fee and rebate program for the District of Columbia. The resolution passed by a vote of 6-0-1:**

**[http://anc1a.org/Resolutions/2018/03\\_2018%20Climate%20Reinvestment%20Resolution%20ANC%201A.pdf](http://anc1a.org/Resolutions/2018/03_2018%20Climate%20Reinvestment%20Resolution%20ANC%201A.pdf)**

### **Advancing Solar Energy in the District**

DC's Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) requires that 50 percent of DC's energy come from renewable sources by 2032, with 5 percent coming from solar energy generation in DC. The District is not on track to meet either requirement. The Cooperative/HOA Solar Expansion Act (B22-0229) prohibits homeowners and co-

op associations from placing unreasonable restrictions on residents installing solar panels on their roofs. The Solar Ready Roofs Act (B22-0437) requires that new buildings in DC be designed and built such that their roofs can accommodate solar panels and that 10 percent of the building's energy needs can be generated from on-site renewable sources.

Q: Will you support legislation expanding solar energy production in the District – including the Cooperative/HOA Solar Act and the Solar Ready Roofs Act – and pledge to work with the Sierra Club on innovative efforts for more renewable energy in DC?

Yes  No

### **Protecting Renewable Energy Funding**

The Renewable Energy Development Fund (REDF) and the Sustainable Energy Trust Fund (SETF) were created to provide funds to increase the deployment of clean energy sources in the District. The SETF also provides money for energy efficiency programs. These funds were envisioned as dedicated solely for those purposes and intended to be available year to year. In recent years, money from these funds has been swept into the general fund, a violation of the intent of the law.

Q: Will you oppose diverting money from these funds away from renewable energy and energy efficiency programs and into the general fund and instead provide the oversight required to ensure that the Department of Energy and Environment is efficiently and effectively using these funds to expand clean energy in DC?

Yes  No

**I am against diverting money away from renewable energy programs. Diverting money to the general fund undermines our efforts to reduce our reliance on non-renewable energy.**

**For example, I was excited to learn about the solar grant program and the opportunity to add solar panels to my house when I needed to replace the roof a decade ago. However, when the project began we learned that there were no**

**funds in the program and no grant applications were being accepted. I was not able to delay the project or afford solar panels without the grant. So, today I do not have solar panels despite my commitment to the environment. I am sure my story is not unique.**

**If the District is truly committed to green solutions that commitment must be reflected in the budget; and when elected, I will work to establish dedicated funding for renewable energy programs.**

### **Waste Diversion Funding**

The District has set a goal by 2032 of diverting 80 percent of our waste from landfills and incinerators through source reduction and by increasing reuse, recycling, and composting. However, DC is far short of that goal, with 23 percent of our waste being diverted in 2016. Last year, the Sierra Club successfully fought to reverse a proposed budget cut of \$477,000 in funding for staff positions and zero waste programs at the Department of Public Works' Office of Waste Diversion. To come anywhere near the 80 percent diversion goal, funding for this office must increase.

Q: Will you commit to fully funding DPW's Office of Waste Diversion so it has all the resources it needs to effectively carry out its mission and zero waste goals, including sufficient resources for education and enforcement?

Yes  No

### **Composting**

In January 2018, the District's new recycling requirements went into effect across residences and commercial properties, setting uniform standards for the entire city. The new rules were an improvement from past (and sometimes confusing) guidelines on the types of waste that were recyclable in DC. In addition to recycling, composting of food and other organic materials is an important component of reducing waste sent to landfills and incinerators. Currently, composting is not widespread in DC. Though the District has analyzed the feasibility of curbside composting and is working on a five-year plan to implement it, DC is not embarking on similar efforts to address the large volumes of food waste generated by restaurants and apartment buildings.

Q: Will you support efforts to expand composting and education programs for composting in the District and work with the Sierra Club on developing new legislation and maintaining effective oversight of the executive branch to encourage composting in apartment buildings and by restaurants?

Yes  No

**Definitely. I thought it was great that the Department of Public Works set up composting collection points at key locations last year, including one at the Columbia Heights Civic Plaza. Based on my experience in Columbia Heights, the program is valued with neighbors regularly scheduling their weekends to include a visit to the plaza to drop off their organic materials. We must find smart ways to expand composting to include apartment buildings and restaurants and make it easier for residents and businesses alike to participate.**

### **Straws on Request**

Single-use plastic straws are a significant pollutant of oceans and rivers, including in our local Potomac and Anacostia watersheds. Nationwide, 500 million plastic straws are discarded every day. Here in DC, Sierra Club volunteers last year worked with the Anacostia Watershed Society to sort trash removed from the Anacostia River. After counting the waste separately, volunteers found approximately 6.5 percent of the litter was from straws.

Q: Will you support a "plastic straws on request only" policy for restaurants in DC and pledge to work with the Sierra Club on developing legislation and maintaining effective oversight of the executive branch to put this policy into effect?

Yes  No

**Absolutely, I think this is a great idea. Not only would I support "plastic straws on request only," I would support a 5¢ fee for straws similar to the plastic bag fee which I've found to be very effective in reducing the amount of plastic that ends up in our waterways.**

### **Dedicated Metro Funding**

Metro is the only major subway system in the nation without a dedicated funding stream. In recent years, Metro has been addressing safety issues, deferred

maintenance, and other basic infrastructure needs. Nonetheless, as the system enters its fifth decade, it regularly faces shortfalls in both its capital and operating budgets. Just to maintain existing service levels requires an additional \$500 million in annual dedicated funding for Metro from local governments, and even more would be needed to restore previous service levels. Under the existing funding formula, \$500 million in additional money would require a \$178 million annual contribution from the District.

Q: Will you support establishing a dedicated funding stream in the form of a new tax to provide Metro with DC's \$178 million share of the \$500 million needed in additional Metro funding?

Yes  No

**I heartily endorse dedicated, bondable funding. As a regular rider, I think Metro is one of our City's most significant transportation assets. Rather than just provide enough funding to keep Metro on life support, we need to undo the damage of decades of deferred maintenance, improve the system with better infrastructure, new rail cars, and new connections between stations. Additional funding priorities I would advocate for, are pedestrian tunnels connecting stations such as Chinatown and Metro Center, and the construction of new exits from stations that improve access to neighborhoods.**

### **DC Streetcar Budget**

The Department of Transportation has plans to extend the District's first streetcar line, connecting the current H Street line to Georgetown via Downtown and to Ward 7 along Benning Road. This would better link Ward 7 residents to job opportunities across the city and create a high-capacity east-west transit link, powered by electricity from increasingly renewable sources. Despite DC's pressing needs for more transit and to transition away from fossil-fuel-based transportation, the DC Council last year slashed millions of dollars for the Streetcar and shifted the remaining money to the last year of the six-year budget cycle, resulting in a complete halt to Streetcar expansion.

Q: Will you support allocating the millions of dollars needed to engineer and build the Streetcar extension from Georgetown to the Benning Road Metro and oppose

efforts to cut Streetcar funding or move it to the later years of the six-year budget cycle?

Yes  No

**Yes, I support expanding the DC Streetcar network. We need to have true support for the streetcar and the long-term planning to ensure that we are spending money wisely and without waste. I have seen our lack of true commitment to the Streetcar result in cost overruns and unnecessarily rising operational costs. This must stop as it only serves to diminish confidence in the Streetcar.**

**If a situation arises that requires me to make a choice between the Streetcar and WMATA in any given fiscal year, my first choice will be WMATA which must be fully funded to maintain the infrastructure we already have. Assuming we can have both and WMATA gets a dedicated funding stream, I recommend:**

- **A payment system whereby the same MetroCard used on Metro rail and bus is also used on streetcars. This will encourage use of the streetcar;**
- **Dedicated streetcar lanes, begun as dedicated bus lanes. This would not only improve current service but it would allow adjustments to be made in stops and routes in advance of expanding the system;**
- **An honest understanding of what the streetcar expansion would cost and why the expansion of the system is a better use of funds than other forms of public transportation; and,**
- **A broader vision for a more robust streetcar network that doesn't just connect Washington neighborhoods, but also connects those neighborhoods to areas beyond the District's borders.**

**Lastly, we must also consider the future and impact of car services such as Uber and Lyft. While they have both become popular services, currently these services can snarl traffic due to the uncontrolled nature of their pick up and drop off practices. These services have also made traffic worse in the District by attracting customers away from the various forms of public transportation. This is alarming as Uber and Lyft actually increase our carbon footprint and make us a harder city to move around in.**

## **Bus & Bike Lanes**

The District's streets have limited right-of-way for travel, almost all of which is devoted to automobile lanes and parking and very little of which is devoted to transit and cycling. Expanding bus and bike lanes would reward District residents who choose to travel in ways that conserve land, energy, and fuel. Proposals by the DC Department of Transportation and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority would create bus-only lanes on 16th, H and Eye Streets NW, making travel faster and more reliable for thousands of bus riders who live in wards 1, 2, 4, 6, 7, and 8. In addition, DDOT's long-range plan envisions miles of protected bicycle lanes – which makes bicycling safer, easier and more popular and also reduces fuel use. The transportation plan calls for bike lanes on streets across DC, such as East Capitol Street, Naylor Road SE, Massachusetts Avenue NW/NE/SE, New Hampshire Avenue NE, and 6th Street NW.

Q: Will you press DDOT to accelerate plans for more bus and bike lanes (which take away lanes for automobiles and parking) and budget adequate money for DDOT to build these bike and bus lanes?

Yes  No

**Absolutely. I'm currently working with DDOT to discuss and plan implementation of some of the protected bike lane components suggested in their cross-town multimodal study.**

**Additionally, in March 2014, I advocated for expanding the Circulator Bus system to connect the Petworth/Park View area with Dupont Circle/K Street part of town. (see resolution here <http://anc1a.org/Resolutions/2014/Circulator%20Resolution.pdf>). I have been and continue to be a strong supporter of creating and expanding a District-wide bike lane network, preferring protected bike lanes where possible. In July 2015, I introduced a resolution advocating that DPW maintain bike lanes in addition to parking lanes during street cleaning (see here: <http://anc1a.org/Resolutions/2015/Bike%20Lane%20resolution.pdf>) and in April 2016 I asked DDOT to conduct a feasibility study to create protected bike lanes on Park Place, NW (see here**

<http://anc1a.org/Resolutions/2016/Park%20Place%20Traffic%20Study%20Resolution%20OCI.pdf>).

We want reliable transportation whether we drive, walk, bike, or take metro or the bus. We need the right balance to make them all work – including parking. Having actively participated in DDOT’s east-west crosstown study (mentioned above), I know that trade-offs must be made. While I’m on record as wanting dedicated bike lanes on Park Place, one place I would like to see dedicated bus lanes considered is Georgia Avenue – and on every route where the Streetcar is being considered.

In addition to dedicated bus lanes, I would like to see a smarter expansion of bus routes such as the new 59 limited-stop bus on 14<sup>th</sup> Street which could be extended to National Airport. It cuts through many neighborhoods without good access to Metrorail. Even when Metro is performing well, easy access to our closest airport will always be a great asset.

### **Comprehensive Plan**

In recent years, population and job growth in metropolitan DC has shifted toward the District. This has spared thousands of acres of wildlife habitat and farmland from suburban development, and reduced pollution caused by driving. DC's population is expected to continue to grow substantially in coming years, to over one million residents. DC has built thousands fewer housing units than called for under the 2006 Comprehensive Plan and housing prices are sharply increasing. Adding new housing is difficult and costly, in part because 71 percent of DC's land is zoned for single-family homes or rowhouses, and much of the rest is in high-priced areas like downtown.

Q: Will you call for the Office of Planning’s updated Comprehensive Plan – which the Council must approve – to accommodate a larger population, zoning changes that allow increased density and mixed-use development, and zoning changes that allow more multifamily housing within low-density areas?

Yes  No

**Absolutely. I am not a “yes” or “no” person, but rather someone who is always interested in “how.” In listening to all the testimony at the recent**

**Comprehensive Plan hearing, I was struck that everyone seemed to want the plan to achieve the same goals with one key difference. Those supporting the amendments want “affordable” housing to be the most important priority for DC and those opposed to the amendments care deeply about neighborhood “character” and don’t want it destroyed by development. During the testimony both points of view were presented as if this is a binary choice ... but this is false. We can do both.**

**Over the past five years, I’ve successfully used the Comprehensive Plan, our Zoning regulations, and our historic preservation law to work with developers and create 964 units of new housing both delivered and in the development pipeline that is compatible with the character of the community. Most significantly, these developments are creating or preserving 463 units of affordable housing (205 of them deeply affordable) and 166 units of affordable senior housing – and all without displacing a single resident.**

**There is room to grow to accommodate a growing city and we must do this across all eight wards. With this in mind, we need to have a vision on what a city of a million residents will look like, how that growth can be compatible with the best features of centuries old neighborhoods, what impact that growth will have on our infrastructure, and how to plan and prepare for the transportation needs of both the neighbors who live here now and the neighbors who will move here in the next twenty years.**

**I’m confident the District can continue to grow provided we make good decisions and have a solid 10- or 20-year plan in place to get us there.**

### **Clean Elections**

On February 6, the DC Council unanimously approved the Fair Elections Act, creating a public election financing program to lessen the influence of big money donors – such as a polluters – and empower small donors and grassroots activists. It is projected to cost the District about \$5 million a year, a tiny fraction of DC's multi-billion dollar budget.

Q: Will you support full funding for the public financing program and oppose any budget that does not fund it?

Yes  No

**Yes, as this was unanimously approved by the Council and signed by Mayor Bowser into law. I am pleased that the Mayor has provided funding for the Fair Elections Act. As a candidate, I know firsthand how difficult it is to compete when the incumbent accepts almost limitless contributions from corporations, developers and money from outside the District. I am extremely proud of the contributions I have raised to date, as an analysis by DC for Democracy indicates that I have the highest percentage of contributions, 80%, from individuals within the District of Columbia.**

**(<https://dcfordemocracy.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/dc4d-ocf-stats.pdf>)**