

Revised FY 2021 Budget Request on behalf of
LGBTQ+ Organizations

June 4, 2020

The Honorable Phil Mendelson
Chairman of the District of Columbia Council
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20004

In January, our Coalition advised the Mayor on important investments for the LGBTQ+ community in the FY 2021 Budget. Due to COVID-19, the Mayor has had to make sacrifices and tough decisions and none of us envy the position that she was placed in. However, members of the LGBTQ+ community have continuously had to make sacrifices and tough decisions their entire lives. And, to continue to put their needs on the chopping block will only further put their lives and those of friends, family, and others at risk.

Due to the changed circumstances, we have revised our original budget requests for the Fiscal Year 2021, including:

- Added a request for an additional \$130,000 to restore the two investigator positions in OHR cut in the Mayor's budget proposal
- Removed our request for \$3,500,000 for the Office of LGBTQ Affairs to establish a competitive grant program; however, do support the Office receiving \$71,000 to hire a program support specialist
- Removed our request for \$700,000 Enhancement for the Office of Aging and Community Living for the District's Community Dining Program and Cultural Competence
- Removed our request for \$250,000 Enhancement for ServeDC for an LGBTQ+ Volunteer and Professional Development Program
- Removed our request for \$300,000 of reserved funds for the Capital Trans Pride
- Removed our request for \$600,00 Enhancement to the Department of Human Services for LGBTQ+ Youth Specific Extended Transitional Housing

The remaining requests reflect some of the unmet needs of the LGBTQ+ community that have become more crucial during the COVID pandemic. These requests continue to have support from a coalition dedicated to the health, safety, and well-being of the LGBTQ+ community. We believe that the Council should take advantage of revenue streams currently not being used or underused and *not* increase funding for the Metropolitan Police Department to help cover these priorities and other pressing needs.

At 9%, DC has the largest percentage of persons openly identifying as LGBT in the country, which is significantly larger than the second-place city. The LGBTQ+ community is well represented in all levels of the DC government, including 27 Commissioners from the Advisory Neighborhood Commissions. Despite these statistics, we must acknowledge that problems still exist for many in the LGBTQ+ community and are only exacerbated during this pandemic.

As DC strives to be the most inclusive, diverse, and dynamic city in the country, we must address the ongoing needs of the most marginalized members of the LGBTQ+ community. We are grateful for your dedication to the LGBTQ+ community, and we look forward to your continued support.

For correspondence regarding the full request, please contact Japer.Bowles@smyal.org. For correspondence regarding specific requests, please see contact information following each request.

Prepared By:

Japer Bowles
ANC Rainbow Caucus
ANCRainbowcaucus@gmail.com

Ryan Bos
Capital Pride Alliance
ryan@capitalpride.org

Ruby Corado
Casa Ruby
corado@casaruby.org

Jonathan Gilad
The DC Center
jonathan@thedccenter.org

Tyrone Hanley
Gay and Lesbian Activists Alliance
tyrone.s.hanley@gmail.com

Cyndee Clay
HIPS
CyndeeClay@HIPS.org

Sultan Shakir
SMYAL
sultan.shakir@symal.org

June Crenshaw
Wanda Alston Foundation
jcrenshaw@wandaalstonfoundation.org

Benjamin Brooks
Whitman-Walker Health
bbrooks@whitman-walker.org

Darren Vance
Rainbow Families
darren@rainbowfamilies.org

With support from:

Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, DC

Gertrude Stein Democratic Club

*Stonewall Kickball DC
FreedomFoundation*

Woodhull

Pitchers

League of Her Own

Math4Cure

Trade

LGBT Bar Association of DC

Number 9

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Addressing Ongoing Anti-LGBTQ Bias and Rising Hate Crimes

Request: \$630,000 Enhancement for the Office of Human Rights

The Office of Human Rights (OHR) is responsible for enforcing DC nondiscrimination laws but is underfunded, which means the office continues to experience a backlog in cases causing long delays. OHR needs more money to hire additional staff to end the case backlog and to meet its statutory deadlines for resolving cases.

Additionally, OHR needs additional resources to explain the rights and responsibilities under the Human Rights Act and other laws under its jurisdiction. OHR currently cannot meet the demand for training due to capacity. Another staff person in outreach and education will permit the office to better educate the public about expanding human rights protections in the District.

Finally, the Mayor has put the office in charge of her hate crime response unit. However, no money has been allocated to pay for another staffer. An additional staffer would allow that person to focus on the unit and not take time away from the current staffer's other responsibilities.

This request is consistent with the Mayor's priority for a safer Washington for all eight Wards and supporting efforts to end hate crimes. Mayor Bowser has stated she will "work to create a comprehensive multi-agency strategy to identify and reduce violence directed towards the LGBTQ community and improve the city's strategic efforts to reduce bullying and ensure all youth can be safe in and out of school."¹

Total: \$630,000

- \$530,000 for 6 FTEs for the Equal Justice Program, including:
 - Restoring \$130, 000 for the 2 investigator positions cut in the Mayor's budget
 - Funding 4 new investigator positions and 1 new intake position to end the backlog of cases and complete cases in a timely manner
- \$100,000 for for 1 FTE and expenses for public outreach, training, and education, including coordination of the hate crimes response team to address rising hate crimes in the District

Point of Contact:

Tyrone Hanley - Tyrone.s.hanley@gmail.com

¹ Bowser Transition Committee Plan, p. 32

Capital Pride Celebration

Request: Waive service fees for LGBTQ+ protest commemoration events

The Capital Pride Alliance (CPA) is requesting that the DC Government waive city fees for services required to organize the annual Capital Pride Celebration beginning in FY2021 and each year thereafter.

The Capital Pride Celebration takes place each June to provide the residents and visitors of Washington, DC the opportunity to celebrate, educate, support, and inspire our diverse LGBTQ+ community. We estimate that over 550,000 people from the National Capital Region and around the world come to this event each year, bringing an estimated 50 million tax dollars to the local government of Washington, DC.

One of the two cornerstones of the annual Pride Celebration is the Pride Parade. Even now, it still serves as a protest; it is an opportunity for members and allies of the LGBTQ+ community to come together within our neighborhoods, to be heard and be seen in a safe space. It brings together over 200 local, regional, and international organizations, businesses, and city officials in support of the Washington, DC Metro LGBTQ+ community. It is one of the most beloved parades in Washington, DC, traversing the historical LGBTQ+ neighborhoods of Dupont and Logan Circles.

The Capital Pride Festival and the Capital Pride Concert take place on America's Main Street, the historic Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, in the shadow of the U.S. Capitol building. As one of the few remaining free Pride Festivals and Concerts in the United States, and one of the few of its kind in Washington, DC, the two events bring together nearly 300 organizations and businesses, and include three stages of entertainment that showcase a diversity of local, regional, and international entertainment.

The increased costs, specifically fees charged by the government of the District of Columbia to cover city services and special event requirements, are putting the annual Capital Pride Parade, Festival, and Concert in jeopardy. In 2019, CPA paid over \$230,000 to the Washington, DC government to cover required city services and another \$66,000 to cover special event requirements. This is an increase of over \$100,000 in just three years. Compounding this is the financial strain placed on CPA due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As an organization with a primarily event-based budget, the Capital Pride Alliance is at risk of losing over 90% of its funding.

The Capital Pride Parade, Festival, and Concert are free events for the community and are organized primarily by a large cadre of volunteers. The Capital Pride Celebration is one of the largest in the United States and has become well-known and revered around the world. Similar Pride Celebrations are financially supported by their respective city governments. Some of those cities include, New York City, Boston, Atlanta, and Los Angeles. In addition, Pride Parades in other municipalities are considered First Amendment assemblies. The corresponding local governments do not pass along to the Pride organizing committees fees for municipal services. Some of these city governments go a step further by investing in the annual Pride Celebration, recognizing the positive economic impact. In addition, the cities then reinvest money raised as a result of these events directly into the local LGBTQ+ community.

The Capital Pride Alliance requests that the DC Government waive an anticipated \$400,000 in city services for FY2021 and each year thereafter. This will be necessary to ensure that the annual Pride

Parade, Festival, Trans Pride, API Pride, and the volunteer and professional development programs will be able to continue. This will also allow CPA to continue its support of partner Pride events, such as DC Black Pride, DC Latinx Pride, Youth Pride, and Silver Pride, along with supporting other LGBTQ+ partner organizations. Finally, the uninterrupted continuation of Pride in the Nation's Capital is key for the city to receive the estimated 50 million dollars in tax revenue that is generated from the annual Capital Pride Celebration each year.

Total: ~\$400,000 in fees waived for the following goals:

Secure space, permits, and city services for the Capital Pride Celebration

Point of contact:

Ryan Bos - Ryan@capitalpride.org

Implementation of the LGBTQ+ Health Data Collection Amendment Act of 2018

Request: \$700,000 Enhancement to the Department of Health and the Office of the State Superintendent

In 2018, the DC Council adopted the LGBTQ+ Health Data Collection Amendment Act “to amend the Department of Health Functions Clarification Act of 2001 to require the Department of Health to collect information on sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression of respondents to the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System.” However, numerous testimony from experts of DOH and OSSE revealed that the funding from grants administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention were inadequate to fully implement the law.

LGBTQ data collection is central to enacting federal and local policies to address discrimination, the HIV epidemic, the disparate treatment of LGBTQ students in DC schools, and designing interventions that improve the health and wellbeing of the District’s diverse population. Furthermore, data collection on LGBTQ people during the COVID-19 pandemic is missing. 170 LGBTQ health organizations have spoken out recognizing the vulnerability of many in LGBTQ communities to COVID-19. According to reports from the Washington Blade published on April 1, 2020, Washington, DC is the only jurisdiction that has begun to collect SOGI data on coronavirus patients. DC DOH has the opportunity to be a leader in the nation in demonstrating their commitment to marginalized peoples and evidence-based policy-making.

Therefore, we request that the Mayor enhance the budget of DOH and OSSE to fully implement and administer the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) and Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS). Based on information from the DOH’s Dr. Fern Johnson-Clarke’s testimony before the DC Council on expenses for the BRFSS from 2016-2018, we estimate the costs to be approximately \$250,000. Based on information from the OSSE’s Dr. Heidi Schumacher’s testimony before the DC Council on expenses for the YRBSS from FY2019, we estimate the costs to be approximately \$350,000. We conservatively estimate 1 FTE is required for this project. The middle of the salary range for a scientific professional based on 2019 DC Pay schedule is \$74,983 annual salary, with an additional multiplier of 40% for relevant taxes, healthcare costs, and associated costs. We estimate the personnel costs to be \$100,000.

As Mayor, one of your priorities has always been Good Government, saying, “I will work to restore the public’s faith in our local government and push for one of the most open and transparent systems.”² The collection of this data will help with your goal of “ setting high data-based performance expectations” and “ implementing performance goals tied to budget priorities for all city agencies”.

Total: \$700,000

\$250,000 for FTE(s) and expenses to fulfil the following goals in DOH:
implementation of the BRFSS

\$450,000 for FTE(s) to fulfil the following goals in OSSE:
Monitor the implementation of the YBRSS and BRFSS modules on LGBTQ+ health
To draft and coordinate the drafting of the statutorily required report

² Bowser Transition Committee Plan, p. 48.

Points of contact:

Benjamin Brooks - bbrooks@whitman-walker.org

Japer Bowles - ANCRainbowcaucus@gmail.com

LGBTQ+ Community Center

Request: Compassionate relocation

Washington, D.C. has the largest LGBTQ+ identified population per capita in the country,* yet receives the least amount of support and resources from the government when compared to cities of equal size. LGBTQ+ organizations in DC continue to face physical capacity constraints as their work and needs grow. The concerns regarding space constraints are exacerbated by the possible closure of the Reeves Center, which currently houses two LGBTQ+ organizations — the Capital Pride Alliance and The DC Center. Additionally, LGBTQ+ organizations throughout the city are feeling the pressure from rising rents and rapidly gentrifying neighborhoods. The money spent by all of these organizations on rent and the constant search for new, affordable locations diverts scarce resources from their missions to support the LGBTQ community in Washington, D.C. We ask the District of Columbia to provide funds to purchase property in or around the U Street, NW corridor, or identify city properties that can provide adequate space for a LGBTQ+ Community Center that serves a community the size of Washington, D.C.

Recognizing the current budget situation, we are requesting that if the District is to sell the Reeves Center, that that a suitable location in terms of square footage, and rent be found for the DC Center. This would only be a short term solution, as we have outgrown our current space. We are requesting that the District grant us rent abatement for the time that the Reeves Center was closed, and to allow us to maintain adequate reserves so we can fully implement our services.

Total Request:

\$20,000 for rent abatement

Point of Contact:

Jonathan Gilead - Jonathan@thedccenter.org

Ryan Bos - Ryan@capitalpride.org

Programming to Support Transgender, Nonbinary, and Gender-Nonconforming Youth Who Are Homeless or at Risk of Homelessness

Request: \$480,125 Enhancement for the Department of Human Services

We request that the City provide a locally-funded 3-year pilot grant program to develop and pilot a workforce development program to help empower 20 transgender, nonbinary, and gender-nonconforming (TNBGNC) youth (16-24). The program would support prevention of homelessness as well as support efforts for youth to transition from homelessness to independence.

Economic stability is essential in allowing people to live safe and authentic lives, free from fear and harassment. LGBTQ+ populations experience employer discrimination and bias that result in lower hiring rates, promotion rates, and salaries; as well as higher firing and harassment rates compared to their heterosexual counterparts. These directly negatively affect their ability to prevent homelessness as well as negatively affect their ability to transition from homelessness to independence.

OHR's report³ on the results of resume testing for employment discrimination based on gender identity from 2015 denoted the key findings:

- 48% of employers appeared to prefer at least one less-qualified applicant perceived as cisgender over a more-qualified applicant perceived as transgender.
- 33% of employers offered interviews to one or more less-qualified applicant(s) perceived as cisgender while not offering an interview to at least one of the more-qualified applicant(s) perceived as transgender.
- The applicant perceived as a transgender man with work experience at a transgender advocacy organization experienced the highest individual rate of discrimination.

These funds would allow organizations who work with trans and gender non-confirming youth who are experiencing or are at risk of homelessness to expand efforts to help prevent, reduce, and end homelessness.

Total: \$480,125 annually for three year program for new FTEs and expenses to fulfil the following goal(s):

- provide work readiness and related skills training (e.g., resume and cover letter writing, soft skills training) and may also provide training toward attainment of foundational occupational credentials
- ensure that participants attain the specific services they need to meet the goals and attain the outcomes of the program, with an emphasis on work readiness and making successful transitions from homelessness to independence. manage the overall program, oversees staff and relationships with subcontractors

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https://ohr.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ohr/publication/attachments/QualifiedAndTransgender_FullReport_1.pdf

- develop spaces for social support for trans and gender non-conforming individuals entering the workforce
- develop relationships with employers and external training programs and supports youth in applying for jobs and occupational training
- provides onsite counseling services for program participants, assists in conducting initial assessments of potential participants
- draft and publish a public report detailing the outcomes and evaluation metrics of the program

Point of contact:

Sultan Shakir - Sultan.shakir@smyal.org

LGBTQ+ Intergenerational Synergy Homesharing Pilot Program

Request: \$345,000 Enhancement to the Department of Housing and Community Development

The LGBTQ+Intergenerational Synergy Homesharing Pilot Program (“Pilot Program”) is a home-sharing initiative, implemented within the District of Columbia, that seeks to provide 12 young LGBTQ+adults (ages 18-24) employment opportunities and housing within the homes of 12 older LGBTQ+adults (ages 60 and older) who live alone and have spare living space. Through the Pilot Program, a participating older adult homeowner will hire a participating young adult to perform basic housekeeping tasks several hours a week in exchange for occupancy within the older adult’s home. The Pilot Program is designed with special consideration towards low- to moderate-income LGBTQ+older adults and at-risk LGBTQ+young adults, with particular focus on those who identify as transgender persons of color, and aims to alleviate a number of key disadvantages experienced by these individuals, including: 1) pronounced levels of social isolation as compared to their heterosexual and cisgender counterparts, 2) prohibitive financial and social barriers in accessing affordable housing and resources in part due to both LGBTQ+discrimination and DC’s high cost of living, and 3) lack of employment opportunities for at-risk young adults exacerbated by instabilities caused by LGBTQ+intolerance.

The Pilot Program seeks funding for its launch in Fall 2020 (during which time the young adults will move into the older adults’ homes), and to help build a solid foundation to sustain it through its anticipated two-year-long duration. Specifically, financial assistance is needed for the following:

Total: \$345,000

- \$165,000 for FTE(s) and expense to fulfil the following goals:
 - mental health services for program participants
 - social work services for program participants
- \$20,000 to compensate the supervising CEO of the Pilot Program
- \$20,000 for one part-time administrative support staff person
- \$10,000 to compensate consultants and trainers hired to train and prepare participants for living with another individual
- \$57,600 to provide stipends for older adults (\$400/month/individual)
- \$48,000 to cover the costs of supporting the at-risk young adults (\$2,000/young adult for supplies; \$2,000/young adult for clothing)
- \$14,400 for general overhead/administration fees (background checks, tb/drug tests, etc.)
- \$10,000 to cover the costs of program materials, outreach travel, and other ancillary expenses

Follow-up point of contact:

June Crenshaw - jcrenshaw@wandaalstonfoundation.org

LGBTQ+ Senior-dedicated Housing Vouchers

Request: \$480,000 for 20 Housing vouchers

LGBTQ/SGL DC residents, young and old, with and without families have experienced homelessness, social stigma and legal discrimination, past and present in trying to rent in DC. DC has provided 10 vouchers for LGBTQ+residents, five for seniors and five for returning residents. We know this barely makes the mark when trying to identify and house people who are not under the bridge, but couch surfing, living in cars or living in an untenable situation. DCHA voucher covers up to \$2,000 per month or \$24k per year.

Point of contact:

Japer Bowles - ANCRainbowCaucus@gmail.com

Enhancement to the Department of Employment Services to Establish Trans Tech Social Hub

Total: \$350,000 annually

We request an enhancement of \$350,000 to establish a Trans Tech Social Hub to help persons that identify as transgender and queer combat employment discrimination and train for legal employment. Employment discrimination for transgender and queer people is rampant in the District, which leads to them being forced into sex work to survive. The same sex work that many transgender women use to survive while in-between employment keeps them from gaining meaningful legal employment due to prostitution-related misdemeanors and other charges. This creates a vicious cycle that we see many LGBTQ+ residents found themselves in, especially transgender women of color, where unemployment leads to sex work, which leads to unemployment, leading to sex work, and it goes on. Additionally, after many years of surviving with sex work, the transition to legal employment can be challenging, and requires support. TransTech is a training academy and creative design firm to help transgender women learn technical skills that are needed and in demand for the current workforce. We are requesting funds for a 3-year pilot program to be established in the District to provide courses in graphic design, social media and marketing, and entrepreneurship.

Total: \$350,000 annually

- \$350,000 for FTE(s) and expenses to fulfill the following goals:
 - Establish a curriculum around technical skills
 - Purchase/rent teaching space
 - Purchase 15 computers and laptops
 - Provide maintenance for both hardware and software
 - Purchase licensing for Adobe Programs

Point of Contact:

Cyndee Clay, HIPS CyndeeClay@HIPS.org

Transgender Employment, 24-hr Wrap Around Services, and Technical Trade Skills Academy

Request: \$5,000,000 for A Procurement Contract for Trans Services

The Transgender Taskforce, led by Casa Ruby, a trans led non-profit organization whose goal and mission is to better the lives of members of the transgender community. Our mission is to create success life stories among transgender, genderqueer, gender non-confirming, gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals. A major objective is to give members of the transgender community easier access to employment.

The program will target people who identify as transgender, particularly women of color. According to a Human Rights Campaign report, since 2013, there have been more than “130 cases of anti-transgender fatal violence across more than 30 states and nearly 100 cities nationwide... this epidemic disproportionately impacts trans women of color, who comprise approximately 4 in 5 of all anti-transgender homicides.” Another report from the Mayor’s Office of LGBTQ Affairs states that “about one young transgender person is murdered about every two to three weeks,” with Washington, DC accounting for 27% of such assaults.

We are requesting a \$2 million dollars contract and procurement agreement to establish an Employment Program. Additionally, \$2 million dollars towards a 24 hour wrap-around services center. Additionally, we are requesting \$1,000,000 for a Technical Skills Building Academy where people can receive training and acquire much needed skills for employment (GED prep, different trades ie: beauty, plumbing, etc)

Total: \$5,000,000;

- \$2,000,000 to to establish an Employment program targeted for transgender people
- \$2,000,000 to establish a 24/7 Trans empowerment drop in center hour
- \$1,000,000 to provide an academy where people can receive training and acquire much needed skills

Point of contact:

Ruby Corado - corado@casaruby.org

DC Health for a Procurement Contract for HIPS for Harm Reduction and Health Access Network

Total: \$2,250,000 annually (\$6,750,000 for a 3-year contract)

We are requesting a procurement contract between DC Health and HIPS to expand the latter's harm reduction and health services network. Homeless transgender and queer populations continue to face barriers to accessing DC's traditional homeless services. This is especially true for the adult transgender women, for which there are currently no culturally competent shelters, with many choosing to stay on the streets.

HIPS Center for Health and Achievement opened in 2014 as a harm reduction "one-stop-shop." We serve the most at-risk homeless individuals, identifying as transgender or queer, in the District primarily. The Center combines essential drop-in services, harm reduction-based drug treatment, Medically Assisted Therapy, drug treatment counseling, Housing Navigation, Case Management, and Medical Services to an average of 500 individuals per month. Our internal work at the Center is complemented by our mobile services program, which is out on the streets in each ward of the City at least one day a week, 6 am -12 pm, 2 pm -6 pm and then 11 pm – 5 am on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights. HIPS also provides on-site harm reduction services at the Downtown BID day services program. Currently, HIPS Center is overwhelmed and understaffed for the demand providing an essential service to the District. HIPS 4 counseling rooms are nearly solidly booked each day. There is overcrowding in the drop-in Center. When we built the Center, we were seeing an average of 250 client services per month. Currently, we are averaging about 5,000 unique points of service per month.

A recent data geocoding project conducted by the District's Department of Health assessed trends by census tract in new HIV diagnosis, HCV infection, and opioid overdose. The researchers presented these findings — namely that the locations of new HCV infection and opioid overdoses were highly interrelated, but new HIV infections were often distinct from the other two. Hot spots for new HIV diagnoses were strongly correlated with areas where people were engaging in heightened amounts of meth use or where gay/bisexual men and trans women commonly go to engage in group sexual encounters (e.g., bathhouses).

HIPS Specialists continue to gain trust in the community while many continue to refuse DC services, especially where trends in new HIV transmission have been high. These Specialists conduct health and training services such as syringe exchange, safer injection practices, harm reduction education, and safer sex practices. HIPS conducted a 2-year pilot program aimed at addressing HIV risk for young cis men of color and trans women engaging in meth use. Additional funding from the City would be utilized to hire and train peer community health workers that would work remotely throughout the City reaching out to meth and polysubstance users (primarily K2, PCP) users, conduct health education on safer use, host community meetings and group sessions on harm reduction drug treatment, engage users and their social networks in overdose prevention training, and link participants to PreP, naloxone, drug treatment, and other services.

- \$1,500,00 for FTEs and expenses to fulfill the following goals:
 - Expanding the existing health access network at the LGBTQ+ homeless services center, which includes but not limited to:

- Expanding harm reduction drug treatment and counseling
 - Expanding overdose prevention training and case management
 - Expanding the Center's hours to 24 hours for health services
- o \$750,000 for FTEs and expenses to fulfill the following goals:
 - o Reduce overdose, HIV/AIDS, and HCV risks due to Polysubstance use
 - o in LGBTQ+ populations
 - o Outreach to improve health, safety, and outcomes for at-risk LGBTQ+ populations

Point of Contact:

Cyndee Clay, HIPS CyndeeClay@HIPS.org