

Kenyan McDuffie

Candidate Council Ward 5

Discuss what you have done or will do to work collaboratively with other elected officials on issues important to the Latino community.

Prior to resigning in order to run for Council, I served as a Trial Attorney in the Civil Rights Division of the U.S Department of Justice. There, I enforced federal statutes regarding the civil rights of institutionalized persons, including individuals in nursing homes, mental health facilities, prisons, and jails. Importantly, I also investigated and worked with local community organizations to reform police departments around the country that engaged in unconstitutional police practices, including racial profiling of Latinos.

Our Latino population in Ward Five is increasing, and we do not have the services or a plan in place to address this situation. As Councilmember, I will work closely with my Council colleagues as well as community organizations – particularly organizations in Wards One and Two, which have larger populations and a longer history of Latino culture and relations in D.C. – to learn from them and to ensure that Ward Five is a welcoming and tolerant community for all people, and that equal opportunities for education, jobs, business exist for Latinos in our Ward.

Ward Five has few community-based organizations that serve Latinos. As Councilmember, one of my priorities will be to reach out to the DC Office of Latino Affairs, Latino nonprofit organizations, community leaders, as well as representatives from border jurisdictions, to formulate plans to increase outreach and tackle the needs of Ward Five residents by increasing their access to important information and establishing long-term ties that will enhance the services provided to them.

Describe what your policy agenda would be, including ways you would improve the economic and social condition of Latinos and their families, if elected.

To improve the economic and social condition of the increasing Latino population in Ward Five, I will work to expand job opportunities so Latinos in Ward Five and throughout the city can earn livable, family-sustaining wages. I will also work to increase and protect our city's stock of affordable housing and allocate more resources for foreclosure prevention assistance. I will

work with Latino families to increase their access to health insurance, as well as hospitals and clinics that provide culturally-competent health care.

As Councilmember, I will work to attract Latino community-based organizations to establish satellite offices in Ward Five. Moreover, I will work to ensure that Latinos not only get hired, but have the requisite training to qualify and compete for managerial positions on city-financed and private development projects. I will also support efforts to bring Latino-owned businesses to Ward Five.

I will work with organizations to develop and implement plans that reduce the school drop-out rate and combat gang activity and will keep our increasing Latino youth population engaged in positive activities, such as after-school programs, sports, technology training, and leadership training efforts. By doing this, our Ward will become a welcoming and supporting one, thus preventing issues faced by other areas of the City such as drop-out, gangs and drug use.

What is your position on DC implementing the secure community program, and what is your position on comprehensive immigration reform.

I sincerely appreciate and fully support the critical work of the Metropolitan Police Department. However, I do not support DC implementation of the Secure Community Program (“SCP”). There are a number of concerns regarding the SCP, including the reported lack of oversight and transparency by the federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency. Also, DC implementation of SCP would use precious MPD resources and could lead to racial profiling and biased pretextual traffic stops.

I support comprehensive immigration reform and agree with President Obama that passage of a comprehensive immigration reform bill will raise the standard of living for all workers in our country.