

VINCENT  
**ORANGE**  
FOR COUNCIL CHAIRMAN

## DC Latino Caucus Questions

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

As a previous Council member from 1999 until 2007, I worked with my colleagues, Mayor Anthony Williams, Advisory Neighborhood Commissioners and the community to improve the quality of life of District residents. I am known to be a consensus builder, which is exactly what I will bring, in addition to maturity and accountability, if elected Chairman of the Council.

While on the Council, I had direct oversight of the Committee on Government Operations. Through my oversight, DC agencies went from spending \$97 million to \$587 million on local small businesses. Prior to my arrival, only one agency was in compliance with the 50% disposable expenditure law – upon my departure, 54 out of 56 agencies were in compliance.

I am a champion on economic development and delivered jobs associated with Home Depot, a modern Giant supermarket, construction of McKinley Technology High School, and the construction of three new recreation centers namely, Turkey Thicket, Brentwood and North Michigan Park.

During my tenure on the council I also worked hard on improving our schools. I ensured textbooks are provided to public school children by the second week of school, introduced educational standards and, worked with DC Public Schools to completely refurbish Crosby Noyes Elementary School. I revived Public Access Television, including Latino programming, in the newly renovated Brooks Mansion, and increased the living wage to \$11.75 at the time. I also created 10,000 summer jobs and helped create the First Source program, which mandates that companies working on District government projects or programs, provide 51% of their job openings to District residents.

During 9/11, the hotel industry was particularly hit hard and I fought diligently with Mayor Williams to create a \$10 million fund so hotel and service industry employees could receive assistance for their mortgage, tuition, and health care payments.

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

My policies have always focused on improving the lives of all District residents, which I will continue to do. To answer this specific question pertaining to Latinos and their families, I will particularly focus on:

- Enforcing the current living wage of \$12,10, which according to a recent report by the DC Auditor is not being enforced.

- Increase the number of bilingual employees in agencies such as Department of Health and the Metropolitan Police Department, as well as, offer assistance in licensing and obtaining building permits and, increase the number of bilingual expeditors and building inspectors at Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs.
- Continue to champion bilingual education, early childhood education, and allocate funding for school modernization and quality teachers.
- Link education and vocational training directly to jobs for DC residents.
- Increase recreation facilities, athletic and soccer fields to support the various leagues within the District and encourage better scheduling and communication for use of the fields.
- Seek counsel from organizations and entities that represent the Latino population such as the Office of Latino Affairs, the Latino Economic Development Corporation, the National Council of La Raza, and The Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce among others.
- Improve police protection for small businesses and improve sanitation pick up and cleaning of public areas.

As your Chairman of the Council I will support legislation that improves the quality of life so all residents can equally enjoy live, work and play in the District of Columbia.

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

I certainly oppose the Secure Communities Program. Chief Lanier, our police chief, has done an excellent job as crime is down in DC. There are other ways of fighting crime than a program that is susceptible to profiling and discrimination such as the Secure Communities Program. There must be an equitable and equal enforcement of the law.

With regards to comprehensive immigration reform, DC, and the United States, needs new policies that emphasize the importance of immigrant workers - across the skills spectrum. Investing in children is wise as we recognize their role in our workforce as the next generation rises.

We must also understand that immigrants spend money on goods and services, pay taxes, perform jobs and start businesses vital to our economy.

I stand with 63 percent (Pew Research Center) of other Americans who favor a “path to citizenship” for illegal immigrants currently in the United States if they pass a background check, possibly pay fines and have a job. Ultimately, we all need to be engaged in implementing a well thought out Comprehensive Immigration Reform model.