

Male Speaker 1: Giuseppe Niosi

Male Speaker 2: Karim Marshall

Male Speaker 3: Graham McLaughlin

Male Speaker 4: Kenyan McDuffie

Male Speaker 5: Frederick Hill III

Female Speaker 1: Denise Rolark Barnes

Female Speaker 2: Cecily E. Collier-Montgomery

Female Speaker 3: Elissa Silverman

Female Speaker 4: Anita Bonds

Female Speaker 5: Unidentified Voice

[O/V]: Overlapping Voices

[U/A]: Unintelligible audio

[00:00:00 START RECORDING DC At-Large Member of the Council Debate Hosted by the
Office of Campaign Finance]

00:10:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: Good evening and welcome to the final general election debates hosted by the DC Office of Campaign Finance. I'm Denise Rolark Barnes, publisher and owner of The Washington Informer and I service the moderator for tonight's debate. Tonight we will hear from eight or seven candidates competing for the office of At Large Member of the DC City Council. We encourage members of the public to submit questions via the website,

00:11:00

Denise Rolark Barnes: dcdebates.com, that's dcdebates.com, and to participate online using the #DCdebates. Before we get started, let's hear from the director of the Office of Campaign Finance Cecily Montgomery.

Cecily E. Collier-Montgomery: Good evening. Welcome to the 2022 DC fall debate. I am Cecily Montgomery director of the Office of Campaign Finance. The 2022

00:11:30

Cecily E. Collier-Montgomery: DC debates are the third slate debates under the fair elections program. Started in 2018, the FEP is a voluntary public financing program operated by the office of campaign finance to support candidates for local political office in the district of Columbia. All FEP participating candidates for citywide races are required to take part in the debates. It is our hope that these debates

00:12:00

Cecily E. Collier-Montgomery: will help the public to learn more about the candidates, their positions and policy platforms. We want to take a moment to thank our partner organizations and the candidates for participating in the process. Thank you for joining us in our mission to help inform DC voters about the fair elections program candidates and their positions. To learn more about

00:12:30

Cecily E. Collier-Montgomery: the Office of Campaign Finance or the 2022 DC debates, please visit dcdebates.com. The debates will remain on the website through election day, November the 8th for those who could not watch or listen live this evening. Thank you for your support and with that, let's meet our candidates.

Denise Rolark Barnes: The candidates for tonight's debate are Frederick Hill III, a small business owner and

00:13:00

Denise Rolark Barnes: veteran; Kenyan McDuffie, the current ward 5 councilmember; Graham McLaughlin, an operations and financial management executive; Karim Marshall, third generation Washingtonian and public servant; Elissa Silverman, the current at-large councilmember; Giuseppe Niosi, third generation Washingtonian and small business owner; and Anita Bonds, also current member

00:13:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: of the DC city council. Here are the ground rules for tonight's debate.

Candidates will have one minute for an opening statement, 60 seconds or one minute for a direct answer to a question, and 30 seconds for a rebuttal. Each candidate will then have one minute for closing remarks. If candidates wish to respond to an opponent's answer, raise your hand and I'll be sure to call on you as time permits. With that we will move

00:14:00

Denise Rolark Barnes: to opening statements and we will start with Mr. Niosi. Welcome.

Giuseppe Niosi: Thank you very much. My name is Giuseppe Niosi, [U/A] at-large council. I'm a third generation Washingtonian, born and raised in Northeast [U/A]. I'm a husband, a systems engineer, a naval reserve Officer, most importantly, I'm a [U/A] who thinks the council

00:14:30

Giuseppe Niosi: has lost touch with their voters of DC. My platform is public safety, education, fiscal responsibility. As I've been door knocking to all the voters, talking to community [U/A] as the biggest things that people are safe, people are

00:15:00

Giuseppe Niosi: learning, they are getting quality education and that our community leaders are making sure that our small businesses are getting the attention that they need. I want to say [O/V] [U/A].

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you, Mr. Niosi, we will move now to, Mr. Niosi thank you. Thank you very much. Your time is up [O/V]. Now we will move on to councilmember Silverman, and we need some

00:15:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: sound from councilmember Silverman, at least I'm not. Okay.

Councilmember Silverman we're going to come back to you. Mr. Marshall.

Karim Marshall: Can You hear me?

00:16:00

Denise Rolark Barnes: Yes.

Karim Marshall: Okay. So, good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for taking the time out of your afternoon to ask questions and learn about [U/A]. My name is Karim Marshall. I'm a third generation Washingtonian, a husband, a father, and a product of DC public schools. In fact, public schools are so important to me because they're the reason I was able to have such a strong success in life. As a product of DCP, I was able to get into an Ivy league college,

00:16:30

Karim Marshall: do well in that college and then become a lawyer. I have 12 years of government experience. So, I've spent the bulk of my career serving my residents and serving the government and I would love to bring that experience and that opportunity of making DC a better place to you as your next at-large councilmember. The three things that are most important to me are to make sure that we have safe streets, an education system that works with all of our learners and enough housing so that people don't get priced out of the city.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you

00:17:00

Denise Rolark Barnes: Mr. Marshall. Mr. McLaughlin.

Graham McLaughlin: Good evening. My name is Graham McLaughlin. I've been in DC 20 years, trying to make a difference in every way that I can. For example, I didn't just say, "Gosh we need more affordable housing". I opened my home to guys coming out of prison and we built intentional community for a decade. I didn't just say "We need to

support young people;" I mentored two boys for eight years; it was a casa for foster youth and have volunteered in the juvenile

00:17:30

Graham McLaughlin: detention center at YSC. I didn't just say "We need to end the income equality gap," I'm on the board of a nonprofit accelerator and venture firm for black and women-owned businesses and I've worked with a number of returning citizens to launch their own businesses that now hire 40 DC residents. But it's not just as an individual, at scale I run a health equity program at one of the largest global organizations in the world that serves over a hundred million people annually. You have a decision to make. Do you want change or do want

00:18:00

Graham McLaughlin: more of the same? I believe that I have the qualifications to serve and the heart to lead as well. I would love one of your two votes for DC council at-large.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you, Mr. McLaughlin. We'll now go to- back to councilmember Silverman.

Elissa Silverman: Good evening Denise. Can you hear me now?

Denise Rolark Barnes: Yes, I can hear you now.

Elissa Silverman: Wonderful. Well, great to join everyone. Thank you to all the sponsors. I'm

Elissa Silverman. I'm currently serving as your councilmember and I'm an independent-

00:18:30

Elissa Silverman: I'm asking for your vote tonight. You're going to hear from all of us about how we care deeply about public safety, public education, affordable housing and jobs, and we all do. The challenge for you as a voter is to figure out who is the best choice. If you are a voter who thinks we need to spend your tax dollars better, hold DC government more

accountable and follow through to see those tax dollars pay off, I'm your candidate. We are facing a lot of challenges in this city and I've

00:19:00

Elissa Silverman: dealt with big challenges redistricting this city. I was in charge of that. We got it done and I think the secret there was hearing all voices, paid family leave, another big issue I've dealt with, managed a coalition of support inside and outside government, work with those who opposed it. [U/A] [O/V]

Denise Rolark Barnes: [O/V] Thank you councilmember Silverman, you've run out of time.

Elissa Silverman: And we've delivered benefits for working families. Thank you.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. We're going to move on to a councilmember

00:19:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: McDuffie.

Kenyan McDuffie: Thank you, Denise. My name is Kenyan McDuffie, I'm a fourth generation Washingtonian, a husband and father of two daughters, and for 10,502 days I was a Democrat representing ward 5 on the council. I'm running to be your next at-large councilmember to create safer neighborhoods with greater economic opportunities for every resident across our city. I'm running because growing up in the 1980s and 90s, I saw firsthand the toll that drugs, violence and hopelessness

00:20:00

Kenyan McDuffie: took on our city. It was an opportunity to be a male carrier with the US postal service that literally changed my entire life's trajectory and put me on a path to become the first man in my family to graduate from college, work for Congressman Eleanor Holmes Norton, and to graduate from law school. It was my desire to improve my own community and change the odds for those struggling around me that first led me to run

for public office, and I'm running today because now more than ever, the council needs bold leaders with track records of delivering results, real results

00:20:30

Kenyan McDuffie: to help create a city that is more equitable, more just, and more inclusive.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you, councilmember McDuffie, and Mr. Hill.

Frederick Hill III: Hello. Can you hear me?

Denise Rolark Barnes: Yes.

Frederick Hill III: Okay. Thank you so much. My name is Fred Hill, and I am a business owner, successfully for over 25 years here in the district. I've hired over 500 DC residents, 180 returning citizens and quite frankly I got sick and tired of watching

00:21:00

Frederick Hill III: our government just ignore the needs of the people. We've heard that there are three council incumbents that are on this call tonight asking for your vote again when the 8, 10 and 12 club haven't done what they should have done the last terms, 2 and 3 terms that they've had. They all voted to defund our police department, which sent this city into a downward spiral of public safety. We have the Family Medical Leave Act that is ignoring 94

00:21:30

Frederick Hill III: thousand DC residents and then, thereby on the other side, taking care of the Maryland residents. Education system right now is going south at a rapid rate. So, I intend to change that. Vote me first for one of those two seats as your council at-large.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you, Mr. Hill. So, now we're going to jump into the questions. I think everybody did it- no, councilmember Bonds, I have not given you the opportunity. Please go. Someone's missing.

Anita Bonds: My goodness. Well, thank you very much.

00:22:00

Anita Bonds: And good evening to everyone. My thanks to the forum organizers and to the public that has joined us tonight. I'm hearing an echo.

Denise Rolark Barnes: You're coming across fine.

Anita Bonds: Please.

Denise Rolark Barnes: You're fine.

Anita Bonds: And I'm also hearing your comments whoever you may be.

00:22:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: I don't know if we're having a problem with audio or something. We stopped the clock councilmember Bonds. We're going to see what's happening.

Anita Bonds: Alright. Thank you.

00:23:00

Anita Bonds: Okay. Okay. Alright. Thank you very much. I'm Anita Bonds, the democratic nominee for at-large council and proud to have won the June primary and represent Democrat citywide. I'm a former ANC

00:23:30

Anita Bonds: chairperson and accomplished public administrator, private sector executive, nonprofit leader, academic program director, and longstanding activist for women, civil, and LGBT rights. I'm a product of DC Public Schools and attended the University of California Berkeley, raised my family in wards 8, 2, and 5, and grew up in ward 7. I've also served as

00:24:00

Anita Bonds: the democratic party leader and founder United Methodist Church and I am one of my mom's caregivers. I joined the council on 12/12/12, and since then I represented the

interests of the residents and workers and businesses citywide and attended to numerous [O/V] [U/A].

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, councilmember Bonds.

Anita Bonds: Alright, I'm still hearing that please.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Yeah, the minute is up. [O/V] [U/A] I think we

00:24:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: we got your opening statement, so we want to thank you. We heard you; you came through clear. So, we're going to go to the questions now. Starting with you Mr. Hill, many DC voters often and those that run for office understand the role and responsibility of a councilmember and in this case an at-large member understand the role differently, particularly an at-large member.

00:25:00

Denise Rolark Barnes: Please share what you believe your role will be and what constituents should be able to expect from you if you win the seat.

Frederick Hill III: Thank you very much for that question and what I understand is the responsibility is that there is full representation of everyone across the city. There are many different issues, as I named a few, public safety, education, healthcare, all of these are very important issues, but what we

00:25:30

Frederick Hill III: haven't had is the true attention that is needed for all people. The council at-large's position would present legislation that would help balance out the quality of life for everyone in the city, not just a select few, and I tend to be that councilmember that can bring with my veteran's experience of ex-operation and execution, and then also 25 years of successful business as a fiscally responsible business owner.

00:26:00

Frederick Hill III: Thank you.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Mr. McDuffie.

Kenyan McDuffie: Thank you for the question, Denise. The role obviously of the councilmember is to legislate and provide rigorous oversight and hold government agencies accountable to deliver services, particularly those who have the greatest unmet needs, but it's also to show up. All the work of the councilmember doesn't just happen down at the Wilson building, and although I've represented ward 5 for the last 10 years, I showed up in communities

00:26:30

Kenyan McDuffie: across the District of Columbia making sure that they know that they have a champion for their issues. When it comes to public safety, I showed up in ward 8 and ward 7, ward 5 to make sure that they understand that when they hear violence and shots and they experience the trauma from public safety, that they have a champion who's going to represent their issues down at the Wilson Building. It's the same for public safety, housing, affordability education, and the issues that matter most to residents regardless of where they live.

00:27:00

Kenyan McDuffie: And so it's legislation oversight and showing up to deliver services to the people who need the help the most.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Mr. McLaughlin.

Graham McLaughlin: Well, as Kenyan said, I mean, it is being a steward of the budget in oversight and we need folks who really thoughtfully consider with a \$19.5 billion budget, how do we spend that money most effectively to support people across the city? I think you as voters have to decide now. We have the most money per resident

00:27:30

Graham McLaughlin: in any city in the nation. Is it getting to you? And I do agree that we need to show up. I think we need to show up before things happen, not just after. How are we getting ahead of problems to invest in a way that we get to root causes as well immediately take action on problems now. What I see as the major role of a councilmember is to work across all 13 councilmembers, to work with the executive and to work with the community, to make policy grounded and who is most impacted

00:28:00

Graham McLaughlin: whether that's parents, students, etc., and then be able to not in public have performative actions where you blast somebody you disagree with, but to work behind the scenes to really make high quality decisions that are going to help-

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you.

Graham McLaughlin: -every person in the city.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you so much. Mr. Marshall.

Karim Marshall: Thank you for the question. In particular I love this question because it gets to my unique value proposition as a candidate. The three

00:28:30

Karim Marshall: aspects of doing this job are to write good law, to build a reasonable budget, and to make sure that you're conducting oversight throughout the course of the year. Now, out of everybody who is running for this position right now, I am the only person who has 12 years of experience in the executive when it comes to conducting oversight to understanding the thought and the reasoning behind how the executive does what it does. I've worked for 3 mayors. I'm the only person who has the on the ground understanding of the executive to be able to conduct

00:29:00

Karim Marshall: oversight in a way that doesn't just look like me screaming at an executive. It looks like being able to work with them and deliver for the residents of the District of Columbia. As far as building budgets, I've helped build four. And as far as writing legislation, I've written more than 20 bills myself, not directed staff to do it, but I've worked with stakeholders to write legislation that not only gets through the executive, but also gets through the legislature passed completely.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you.

Karim Marshall: I've also written [O/V] [U/A].

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Thank you Mr. Marshall.

00:29:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: Councilmember Silverman?

Elissa Silverman: Yes. Denise, so, our main job is to better the lives of district residents and businesses and you have four basic tools to do that. Everyone said legislation. I agree. You also need to make sure that you have the resources in place because if you pass a law, but there's no money for it, then it's really just an empty

00:30:00

Elissa Silverman: promise, rigorous oversight that is something that I am known for, Denise, with paid family leave, for example, that got delivered on time under budget, because I kept telling, I had hearings to make sure it did, and for constituent services, and I think that's something no one has mentioned here, but actually at-large members do quite a bit, is perform constituent services. Some of the most gratifying

00:30:30

Elissa Silverman: moments I have as a councilmember is when you can solve problems on an individual level, whether it's a tax issue at the Office of Tax and Revenue for business.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you councilmember Silverman.

Elissa Silverman: I'm getting [U/A] [O/V].

Denise Rolark Barnes: Time runs short, so we have to keep moving on. Mr. Niosi?

Giuseppe Niosi: Thank you for the question. I just want to say that I am, same problem as Anita Bonds, I hear the tech in my ear, and I just want to make sure

00:31:00

Giuseppe Niosi: that that's addressed. But I believe that a councilmember needs to be accountable to the people of Washington DC. That includes all eight wards. As I've been door knocking and talking to people they feel as if the council has lost touch and I believe that bringing with me accountability, transparency, integrity, and hard work and effort will make the council a

00:31:30

Giuseppe Niosi: better place. As a Naval reserve officer and systems engineer I believe that my skills that I've learned from the US merchant Marine Academy and traveling around the world to 6 out of 7 continents will make the council more well-rounded and bring forth a diversity of perspectives. Thank you.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you very much. Councilmember Bonds.

Anita Bonds: Yes. Thank you very much.

00:32:00

Anita Bonds: I'm still hearing the echo, but I will plow through this. Okay. Yes. The most important aspects of the job of councilmember is to represent your constituents, which are, at large, is the entire city and that is to represent their interests and their concerns and that comes in the form of making sure that there is legislation that addresses

00:32:30

Anita Bonds: those concerns and their interests as well as you have to spend your time focus on the aspects of making sure that the agencies are producing, and I take great interest in understanding that these agencies are also under the guidance of the executive.

00:33:00

Anita Bonds: I've worked for the executive for many years, starting in 1979 and that went through 1990. So, I think I have a little more years at that task, but my point is- [O/V]

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Thank you. Thank you, councilmember Bonds.

Anita Bonds: -it takes more than just-

Denise Rolark Barnes: [O/V]. Thank you.

Anita Bonds: -being a legislator. It really does require you to have [O/V].

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you, councilmember Bonds.

Anita Bonds: [U/A] representing the citizen's opinions.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you, councilmember Bonds.

00:33:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: And I'm not sure if you're having a difficult time hearing me and I hope that folks can fix the problem that couple of you all are having. I have an IFB that would rather sit on my shoulder than stay in my ear. So, we're all having technical problems this evening, but I think we're doing well. The DC council recently approved the emergency creation of the Office of Migrant Services in response

00:34:00

Denise Rolark Barnes: to the hundreds of migrants who have landed in DC in the last six months, but some advocates have expressed concerns that the law doesn't offer the same protections afforded to citizens experiencing homelessness. How do you plan through legislation or any plan that you have to balance the needs of the migrants sent from other

states with the needs of the unhoused in the District of Columbia, and councilmember

Bonds I'm going to start

00:34:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: with you.

Anita Bonds: Thank you very much for that question. As the echo continues, and it's very distracting, so please forgive me, it's very annoying. Well, I was one of those councilmembers that voted in support of the new Office of Migrant Services, and I stand by that, and I stand by that because we are not understanding yet in the District of Columbia the

00:35:00

Anita Bonds: extent of the influx of the migrants as well as what the needs are and I think making sure that we understand those issues first and foremost is tantamount to us really coming up with a prescription and determining whether or not these are individuals who meet the requirements for our, let's say for instance, our homeless plan. So, I'm very much supportive of what we have

00:35:30

Anita Bonds: already accomplished. I think there will be a hearing in a few weeks, maybe 10 days, and we will learn more and then we can begin to make additional applications.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you so much. Mr. Niosi. What's your plan?

Female Speaker 5: [U/A].

Giuseppe Niosi: Thank you very much for the question. As we all know that Washington DC has been declared a sanctuary city by

00:36:00

Giuseppe Niosi: our mayor and our council. I can't hear anymore. Our residents did not have a voice in the matter. They didn't have a vote in the matter of whether or not the city was

declared a sanctuary city. I believe that it cost our taxpayers roughly 10 million dollars, that being the case adversity has come our way and we will prevail. I believe that we need to ensure that our migrants are taken care of and

00:36:30

Giuseppe Niosi: make sure that they're getting the resources that they need to find ways to plant their roots into our society. Our homeless issue is an entirely different, issue in my opinion, because I believe that it stems from a lot of mental health and not having robust enough economy for people to get the jobs that they need. Thank you.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Councilmember Silverman?

Elissa Silverman: Yes, Denise. So, let's be clear,

00:37:00

Elissa Silverman: what's going on is a cruel political scheme by GOP governors in Texas and Arizona, a highlight federal immigration policy and use us, and these people who are like many of us came to the United States to try to better their lives and they're here legally. I think the Office of Migrant Services is the right thing to do. I think we waited too long to do it, but where the difference

00:37:30

Elissa Silverman: was, we- almost everyone, it was a 12 zero vote. One of us voted present where the difference was, was in terms of making sure that there was full access in terms of people who might be migrants and also decide to stay in the district and whether they could access our homeless services system and also prioritizing families with children and make sure that they could have their own place and not live in

00:38:00

Elissa Silverman: congregate settings. That's where there was a nine to four vote. I was one of the councilmembers who voted to make sure people have access.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Alright. Thank you so much. Mr. Marshall.

Karim Marshall: Thank you for the question. So, I think actually I want to agree with councilmember Silverman on this, and that this is clearly people playing politics with other people's lives and it's heartbreaking. So, I appreciate the fact that the government is attempting to do something to address the

00:38:30

Karim Marshall: unanticipated arrival of these people who are seeking a better life. I've actually run into a couple of residents who had a lot of questions about this, and we have to be really clear. This is an attempt to pit one group of disadvantaged persons against another. We have to be very clear about that and we have to reject it, but what we absolutely have to do is make sure that we are leading with a sense of respecting the humanity of the people who are trying to escape really unfortunate conditions. We have to do what we can in order to make sure that they are treated with humanity as long as they're in the District of Columbia and that they are set up for success wherever

00:39:00

Karim Marshall: they go next or whether they stay here.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Mr. McLoughlin?

Graham McLaughlin: Yeah, I think we're going to all be pretty aligned here, and I'm proud to be a DC resident with the way they council and the mayor have handled this. I mean, we are talking, as Karim and Elissa, talked about trafficking human beings for political gain. It's unconscious bull and I'm so proud of DC that we are working to treat every single person who comes to this city with the dignity and divinity that they have.

00:39:30

Graham McLaughlin: This is an issue. We have limited resources to support a significant number of people and I do agree with Karim. I don't think we want a Jamestown moment here

where we're trying to pit, you know, sort of current residents versus migrants coming in, etc., for services. I appreciate what the council is trying to navigate on this, agree with the way that they're approaching it, the compassion that they're approaching it. I think it goes back to how are we thinking about the longer-term aspects of a society that creates opportunity,

00:40:00

Graham McLaughlin: how we increase our housing stock and our affordable housing stock. So, I think these are long term solutions, but I agree with the way that council is handling this and the three colleagues who are on here now, I commend.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Mr. McDuffie?

Kenyan McDuffie: Thank you. Yeah, I would agree with most of what's been said. The reality is you've got two governors from Republican States in Texas and Arizona that are callously playing

00:40:30

Kenyan McDuffie: political games with people's lives and it's repulsive. It's abominable. So, the reality is what we are doing in the District of Columbia, there are jurisdiction around the country who can learn a lesson about what it means to come together, to work to get things done. I want to thank as I stated previously, Brianne Nadeau, the mayor, for working together to come up with a solution that addresses this problem that's created

00:41:00

Kenyan McDuffie: because of politics. The reality is we have to put the resources in place to provide the services for migrant families, but not pit them against our unhoused residents. We have the resources to do both. We can walk into gum; we just need to make sure we're doing both in the most humane way possible.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Mr. Hill?

Frederick Hill III: Thank you so much. I'm one who sees things a little bit differently when it comes to who all chose to come to this country. I see the same

00:41:30

Frederick Hill III: game being played as it was played with my ancestors many years ago when we talk about the migrants versus our homeless residents that have been here before they came. This is a humanitarian crisis and what we don't need to get caught up in is how we massage the movement of money to take care of some without taking care of all and this again is what we are beginning to see

00:42:00

Frederick Hill III: where they say it's one against the other, but we watched in this city for a very long time how our homeless residents we're not taking care of and we're not giving the attention that they see so many other people getting right now. I call for a more balanced, inclusive resolve to this problem and it takes a group of people to come to understand there is no line drawn between the same.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Let's talk a little bit

00:42:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: about crime and gun violence, an issue that is really disconcerting to many residents in the city and I'm sure members of the council and those of you all who are running for the council. As a matter of fact, it's been listed as a top concern, and I think everyone is trying to find a solution. The word always is "We've got to do something." So, I'd like to know if you become a member of-

00:43:00

Denise Rolark Barnes: a reelected to the council, become an at-large member to the DC City Council, what legislation would you put in place to address the crime issues that are affecting our community? And I'm going to start with you, Mr. McLaughlin.

Graham McLaughlin: Thank you. It is certainly the number one issue that I would guess all of us, but certainly I'm hearing across the city, across every single ward, across every single individual of any background and it's not one solution.

00:43:30

Graham McLaughlin: So, I'm going to hit a bunch, but we only have a minute. So, I do think we need to adequately fund the police in order to be able to handle their portion of the response. I think we need to provide them the technical infrastructure to be able to staff effectively, to be able to be supported effectively and to do their jobs versus triage and only be able to hit certain cases, and then hold them accountable for disclosure rates for their behavior with citizens, etc. But I don't think we can ask the police to do

00:44:00

Graham McLaughlin: everything. We also need behavioral health teams. We also need substance use specialists to be able to address all of the different types of cases that we're seeing and then we need to think longer term as well about how do we support individuals in crises, not just for a night or two, and then to come back on the street, but for long-term behavioral health support and then we [O/V].

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Councilmember Silverman?

Elissa Silverman: Yes. I think that perception is reality here

00:44:30

Elissa Silverman: in that people are feeling unsafe and what my approach would be is for the council to truly have a focus and, you know, I think councilmember Allen, chair of the judiciary committee has a big committee. I think in the next session we should narrow the responsibilities. I think in terms of violence interruption, we're putting more money into that. I would propose that we not have two different violence

00:45:00

Elissa Silverman: interruption agencies. We should consolidate to one, so we have a menu of services that's uniform. I also think we should look at the police reform commission recommendations and implementing the behavioral health recommendation, implementing the recommendation to move some of the things that aren't related directly to public safety that would be better suited for DPW or DDA

00:45:30

Elissa Silverman: in terms of traffic and parking issues to take that off the plate of MPD.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Mr. McDuffie?

Kenyan McDuffie: Thank you, Denise. If elected- When elected, I'm going to ask to be a member of the public safety committee, because when I chaired the committee on judiciary and public safety, I ushered in the NEAR act, which brought a public health-based solution to crime prevention and intervention and District of Columbia that emphasized the need for both accountability

00:46:00

Kenyan McDuffie: and opportunity. Accountability for people who commit crimes in our city, particularly crimes of violence to be held accountable in our system of justice.

Accountability for police officers who over police and don't do their jobs in a way that is thoughtful and engaging in community policing in the way that residents would like to see, and businesses would like to see. But we have to talk about the opportunity side of this to make sure we're ushering in those resources, into communities that have been long neglected and marginalized. We've got

00:46:30

Kenyan McDuffie: a plan that takes into account the things that you're hearing. I wrote the bill. I know what it says. I need to make sure that we're eliminating the lines and layers and red tape so that the Officer of Attorney General's care streets model works in concert with the

Office of Neighborhood Safety and Engagement, the director of Gun Violence Prevention is having regular meetings bringing together and leading on these issues in a way that [O/V] [U/A].

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Thank you Mr.- Thank you, Mr. McDuffie. Mr. Marshall?

Karim Marshall: Thank you. So,

00:47:00

Karim Marshall: I think we need to actually start with acknowledging that people are afraid, and I think that's, that's one of the things that's driving this debate. We're trying to have a discussion about people's fears without acknowledging those fears and people are afraid and that's fair, but we also have to acknowledge that the crime that we're dealing with is the result of 20 years of deliberate disinvestment from particular parts of the city and concentrating poverty. So, in order for us to really address the crime issue, we have to address the under-resourcing issue. We need to be very deliberate about making sure

00:47:30

Karim Marshall: that we reevaluate what police are doing. No one on this panel believes that a person with a gun is the best suitable response to somebody having a mental health crisis at 2 o'clock in the morning, but we haven't yet structured our government in a way to be able to provide that 24-hour crisis response that's necessary to send a mental health professional over as opposed to a police officer, who's got a gun and a command voice. We also need to reevaluate the way we do youth rehabilitation. Right now we have a contact with the youth, and we send him back out to the same environment he came from

00:48:00

Karim Marshall: with the ankle bracelet on, all that does is guarantee that he's going to come back. If we have the chance to talk about it later [O/V] [U/A].

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Thank you. Very good. Thank you. Mr. Hill?

Frederick Hill III: Thank you for the question. As I said before, the police officers are educators as well as our fire emergency staff and our sanitation workers. All should receive a 30% pay raise because they are grossly underpaid. This is also a result from the public safety as I said

00:48:30

Frederick Hill III: before, where three of the council incumbents that are here tonight voted to defund our police. I've never seen anyone dial love, peace, or understanding, but when everybody gets in trouble, they dial 911. When it speaks to our youth, when we have them in custody for something wrong, they did such as first or second-degree murder then we need to force them to go to school while we have them in custody. Of course there needs to be an investment of mental health that hasn't been done before, which has led a lot

00:49:00

Frederick Hill III: of this to go unanswered when the police come out to answer. I do not think that our police should be going out to continue triage on those things. They are there to remove the threat, to remove harm from the person or the people in the community and once they're in custody [O/V]-

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you Mr. Hill.

Frederick Hill III: -then we can [O/V] [U/A].

Denise Rolark Barnes: I am going to next to councilmember Bonds.

Anita Bonds: Thank you very much. That's a very important question that we have on the table now and

00:49:30

Anita Bonds: I think that we have to start with looking at police services, because that's what the public looks at first and foremost and I think that we have to be careful as to how our

police officers are assigned. One of the biggest hurdles we are facing is the lack of respect for our officers in community and that has a lot to do with how we are reacting in community and

00:50:00

Anita Bonds: showing a disregard for so-called authority, and so, I think looking at how the officers are assigned would be one of the things that we really have to focus on. Second thing when we were talking about the office is might as well talk a little bit about how important it would be to have the officers available near school grounds or campuses when young people are on the way to school and when they're leaving

00:50:30

Anita Bonds: school, after school. I think those are some [O/V] [U/A]-

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you councilmember Bonds.

Anita Bonds: -need to look closer at.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Great.

Anita Bonds: The other thing.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Mr. Niosi?

Anita Bonds: Okay, echo starts again.

Giuseppe Niosi: Thank you for the question. We don't need to reinvent the wheel. We already have the answers that we're looking for. Having done ride-alongs with our local police I found that they're understaffed, undertrained, and they lack some of the adequate resources that they need to do their jobs.

00:51:00

Giuseppe Niosi: We need to adequately fund our police. We need to make sure that they're well trained and accountable to the communities that they serve and everyone in Washington, DC. That being said, I do believe that the premise of some of these newly created

violence interrupter programs have great merits and I think that it would be nice to see how they are in the next five years, because I believe that proper mentorship to our youth is vitally important to make sure that they're on the right track in life, but this is not a substitute for police. This is not

00:51:30

Giuseppe Niosi: something that we should do as an alternative but is something to bolster what we currently have. The bottom line is the council needs to make sure that the police are funded adequately, well-staffed, well trained and accountable. Thank you.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Councilmember Bonds mentioned having police presence around schools. I know that the council voted earlier this year to gradually remove police officers from schools

00:52:00

Denise Rolark Barnes: and to replace them with resource individuals, just by show of hands how many of you all would have supported that legislation today?

Elissa Silverman: I supported it.

Anita Bonds: [U/A]. Oh, I [U/A].

Denise Rolark Barnes: Okay.

Karim Marshall: What's the question?

Denise Rolark Barnes: So, how many of you would have supported that legislation or that bill to gradually remove police officers from schools and to replace

00:52:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: them with resource officers. For those who did not raise their hands I'll start with you Mr. Hill, can you explain why?

Frederick Hill III: Well, right now we have enough evidence to show that not having someone of authority when our kids are not even feeling safe to walk to school is worse when they

get to school, and they find out someone there has a gun. A resource officer or a violence interrupter is not going to do any good.

00:53:00

Frederick Hill III: And as I said before, when those situations come about, we need someone who actually has the ability and the authority to bring calm to the situation, to minimize the harm that could come to one. If we know that there are people there that don't have that ability, you're going to see more guns coming into these schools and I disagree with pulling the officers from the schools.

Denise Rolark Barnes: If I'm not mistaken, Mr. McLaughlin you did not raise your hand either?

Graham McLaughlin: I apologize. I was having some trouble.

00:53:30

Graham McLaughlin: hearing. I support school resource officers, but like the move from police to trained specific, you know, officers for schools, school resource officers.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Okay. Mr. Marshall?

Karim Marshall: So, my challenge with the way we've approached dealing with security around schools is that we've treated external threats that might harm our children just as aggressively as we've treated misbehavior of children in schools. I'd like to move away from anything

00:54:00

Karim Marshall: that resembles a carceral state as far as having guns in our schools, with people who are trained to use those guns potentially against our students. I don't want our kids to psychologically be acclimated to seeing guns and people who are supposed to be shepherding them through life. Now, if we're talking about securing the perimeter of the school, I'm fine with that, but I don't want armed guards patrolling inside our school policing our students' activities.

Denise Rolark Barnes: And Mr. Niosi, I don't think you raised your hand either.

Giuseppe Niosi: That is

00:54:30

Giuseppe Niosi: correct. Having a great conversation with a school during the national night out, it was made very clear that they want or at least this specific school wanted to have police officers because frankly they build the rapport with our communities, and it starts with our children and their parents. So, I believe that we should keep police officers, if anything, to make sure that it bolsters our community and brings more harmony to our community. Thank you.

00:55:00

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you.

Kenyan McDuffie: Denise-

Denise Rolark Barnes: And Mr. McDuffie?

Kenyan McDuffie: Yes. [O/V].

Denise Rolark Barnes: I want to come- Yeah. I want you and councilmember Silverman and councilmember Bonds to talk about why you would continue to support that.

Kenyan McDuffie: Sure. Because the research demonstrates that having police in schools doesn't make kids safer and in actuality it means that many kids, often black and brown kids, disproportionately are being introduced

00:55:30

Kenyan McDuffie: into our justice system. I understand the need for parents and others to want their kids to feel safe, but it doesn't mean that they have to have armed officers inside our schools to ensure that. It's why I've supported Safe Passage Programs. It's why I've worked diligently with the organization's closest to the community to make sure that

we're supporting our young folks to get to and from schools safely, but also working with other organizations like black women for justice, to talk about the types of programs

00:56:00

Kenyan McDuffie: that are happening inside our schools. We've gotten away from vocational programs, teaching kids how to be electricians like my dad was, like plumbing, carpenters, being able to have to get quality skills that are in demand today and we need to work with those types of organizations, work with peace for DC and other organizations to make sure that we are actually addressing the opportunity side. I think opportunity for a lot of these kids- [O/V]

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you.

Kenyan McDuffie: -who feel hopeless. [O/V] [U/A]

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. [O/V] Let me move on really quickly to councilmember Silverman.

00:56:30

Elissa Silverman: Denise, I was compelled and by the police reform commission. The police reform commission said that we should not have police in schools, and I remembered back, and I told this to my colleagues in 2004, when MPD was put in the schools, there was a very violent, there was somebody who died in school a very violent incident at [U/A],

00:57:00

Elissa Silverman: and Robert Bob who was the head of the Police Reform Commission, I was the city administrator at that time, and the decision was made to put police into schools to make it safer, but it hasn't been safer, and I was very compelled by Mr. Bob's, you know, recommendation that we should actually take police that gradually phase out. Of course, we want to keep people safe on the property,

00:57:30

Elissa Silverman: but what we really need to do is the interventions that prevent these, you know, interactions from happening, these violent incidents from happening.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. And councilmember Bonds?

Anita Bonds: Yes, I mentioned that point earlier, simply because I wanted to make it clear that having officers in the schools is very frightening to many young people who are not prone to carry a weapon

00:58:00

Anita Bonds: who are just there for an education, and we want to give them an opportunity to grow and to thrive and to really move forward with their lives and having the officers there has been proven to be a deterrent, believe it or not. The other point that I wanted to make as we talk about our young people having an opportunity, I think we are very clear that in the District of Columbia, many of our people

00:58:30

Anita Bonds: graduate or leave the school system and they're looking for jobs, but what they're not looking for is sitting on the corner and not having an opportunity for a job and I think one of the things that we can do as a deterrent is to hook or link a young person that is leaving the school to a bonafide job, so that they know that the subsequent training that they receive will really deliver, you know, a job, money in their-

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you councilmember

00:59:00

Denise Rolark Barnes: Bonds.

Anita Bonds: -pocket, money for their family.

Denise Rolark Barnes: You know, the sound I'm getting in my ear right now says that we are, I can't believe it almost out of time and I've got about 20 more questions that I wanted to

pose to you all, but the second highest priority we want to get this in is you all know, addresses the issue of affordable housing and also addressing the rents, the high rents that DC residents have to pay.

00:59:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: How would you tackle this issue to make DC a more affordable place to live through any piece of legislation that you've already proposed that needs to be implemented or that you would introduce? Mr. Hill, I'm going to start with you.

Frederick Hill III: Thank you so much for that question. I said earlier that our police, our fire emergency staff, and our public school system staff, along with sanitation workers should get a 30% pay raise.

01:00:00

Frederick Hill III: This will put them in a position of where they are on or above the average median income that is a pilot to show that this is what needs to be done with our DC government employees. Now that money comes from the almost 1 billion dollars that the city is slated to spend or lose through waste and abuse right now, by not overseeing, by not managing the money as they should.

01:00:30

Frederick Hill III: When we talk about unaffordable housing, I say that the housing standards should be looked at according to income. Right now, we use the AMI, which is the average media income, which includes Fairfax County and Montgomery County, and the two richest counties in the nation are part of what drives Washington, DC unaffordable for lot of people.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Mr. Niosi.

01:01:00

Giuseppe Niosi: Thank you for the question. It's no joke that Washington DC has some of the highest prices in housing nationwide. I believe that we should be increasing the supply, especially in underserved communities that- but I'd like to focus on the bigger issue because the bigger issue is we need to have a more robust local economy, so people can have the job and we need to make sure that they have proper skill developmental training so they can get the

01:01:30

Giuseppe Niosi: job that they want, because frankly it's very expensive to be in poverty. You can't incur any sort of savings to someday buy your first house. So, I'd like to also incentivize first time home buyer assistance programs. I think there's lack of government transparency and so far as people don't know that they're available, because I'd like to take us from a vicious cycle and incorporate a virtuous cycle where people are buying

01:02:00

Giuseppe Niosi: their first house, supporting their community and thriving in a robust local economy. Thank you.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Mr. Marshall?

Karim Marshall: So, this is a really complicated issue and I'm sure all of us have a lot more to say about this than we can in a minute. So, I'm going to refer you to my website, marshallfordc.com, but there are three things that I can hit on really quickly. We're experiencing a supply failure. We don't have enough in housing for the District of Columbia based on our population. The plan back in 2000 was to get us to 700,000 residents

01:02:30

Karim Marshall: and now that we're here, we don't have enough places to put all of these residents. So, that's why prices are so expensive. We also need to take better advantage of

our existing resources, how public housing for low-income persons is about 50% vacant. And if we could actually get those units so that they were habitable, we could actually take a lot of this pressure off of the housing market. We also have about 10,000 vacant units that we can actually activate with very reasonable accommodations and then finally we need to really increase our stewardship as the council

01:03:00

Karim Marshall: of the housing production trust fund, because the council has not done a great job of being able to manage the use of those funds in making sure that they are going towards people who need it the most.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Councilmember Silverman?

Elissa Silverman: Yes, Denise. We need to build housing for working families, not housing to benefit developers. Right now we are building housing that developers want to build, not housing that we need. So, what do we do? We need to optimize

01:03:30

Elissa Silverman: our tools. Number one, the trust fund as was mentioned, we've never followed the law on how to spend that money, especially for people who make the minimum wage. We need to follow the law inclusionary zoning, jargon term, what is that? When people build buildings, we need more affordable units from those developers who get the density bonus, and we need to play hard ball. If an apartment building, especially one that's rent control

01:04:00

Elissa Silverman: goes up for sale. Then the district needs to look at using something called district opportunity to purchase, to keep that building affordable, you know, we need to build housing for us, not for developers.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Mr. McLaughlin?

Graham McLaughlin: Yeah. Answering the question directly. Three areas, zoning. Number one, I agree with Karim. How do we expand supply, open up two and four units to broader zoning and work with faith institutions

01:04:30

Graham McLaughlin: to allow them to create affordable housing on their land. Preservation, I think we should allocate more money to preservation, which is much cheaper than production and I salute councilmember Bonds, who has done incredible work in this area, but help seniors stay in their homes with support from legislation in other ways and not have property taxes increase so much on them that they can't stay there. And then, third, and the most important push towards ownership, whether that's land trust, limited equity co-ops, or supporting

01:05:00

Graham McLaughlin: more on some of the things that the mayor has done with black home ownership fund in each path. Those are three areas that I would focus on zoning, preservation, and pathways to ownership.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Mr. McDuffie? We don't have any sound.

Kenyan McDuffie: Thanks. I am seated right now in the house that my grandparents bought back in 1952 for \$5,000 and yet the

01:05:30

Kenyan McDuffie: home right next door recently sold for \$900,000. Now me and my wife are both first generation college graduates, dual degree, but we can't afford to buy houses for nearly a million dollars and that's just a sign of what kind of housing crisis that we're living in today and it's one of the reasons why that person experienced led me to author legislation that invests 50% of our budget surplus into the housing invest and trust fund, which has been stated as a primary tool that we use to preserve existing housing

01:06:00

Kenyan McDuffie: to make it affordable, as well as produce new units of affordable housing.

Also offer the bill that when the district leases our property for residents who develop it we require 20% be set aside for affordable across income levels, it goes up to 30% when it's close to mass transit. And so, it's another thing that I think is important that we have to recognize, we have to support great investments like I've done in others, in workforce housing west of Rock Creek Park, because housing affordability should be true in west of the park as well as

01:06:30

Kenyan McDuffie: east of the park and it should be [O/V] accessible to people and families of all income levels.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. McDuffie. And councilmember Bonds?

Anita Bonds: Thank you very much. I appreciate hearing from the panel this evening because housing is one of the issues that's very dear to me. I think all of them know that many of the proposals that they are mentioning tonight are things that we are already doing. We are

01:07:00

Anita Bonds: putting money in rent control. We're putting money in ownership, we are putting money in opportunities for improvement of our public housing stock, fixing some of the broken units, as I call it, where we have a vacancy of about 400, not 10,000. We are also using the vouchers to get people into

01:07:30

Anita Bonds: market rate units in neighborhoods that are also very important to us. We're doing a number of things, most importantly throughout my tenure of eight years with the housing committee.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Councilmember Bonds, I'm sorry [O/V] your time is up.

Anita Bonds: [U/A]. Okay.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Thank you.

Anita Bonds: I can't help if I hear this stuff. [U/A].

Denise Rolark Barnes: No problem. [U/A] a

01:08:00

Denise Rolark Barnes: problem but I'm sorry.

Anita Bonds: [U/A].

Denise Rolark Barnes: And it is a problem that we've come to the end of this conversation tonight. Like I said there's so many other issues that we could have addressed this evening had time permitted, but we have come to the end of our program and it's more of a discussion and not a debate, but the question-and-answer portion of the evening is over, and we'll now provide each one of you an opportunity to make a closing statement. You

01:08:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: have one minute to do so, and so if you talk quickly you might be able to touch on some points that you wanted to touch on that we didn't get to. So, I'm going to start with you, councilmember Silverman.

Elissa Silverman: Thank you, Denise. Thanks so much for the opportunity to talk about issues important to us. Again, I'm Elissa Silverman. It's been my, you know, honor to serve eight years as your at-large councilmember. I'm an independent, I have

01:09:00

Elissa Silverman: been since I got on the council in 2015, and I am asking for your vote tonight. What I've done these past eight years is focus on the important things, make the key investments, and actually follow through holding the government accountable, keeping

residents and businesses always in mind because my goal is to make our lives better here in the District of Columbia.

01:09:30

Elissa Silverman: So, thanks for the opportunity to answer the questions and talk a little bit more about both the great parts of our city and the challenges we face. I think I have the tools to meet the challenge these next four years. Thanks so much.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Mr. Niosi?

Giuseppe Niosi: Thank you again for the opportunity. I know that that was an interesting low curve ball with the technical difficulties, but I'm glad that we got it straightened away, so,

01:10:00

Giuseppe Niosi: you know, life moves on. So, thank you for that. Again, my name is Giuseppe Niosi. I am an engineer, a naval officer in the reserve, and I'm looking to be your next councilmember at-large. I'm asking you again for your vote this evening, coming up on election day, my platform is better education and educational opportunities for all, fiscal responsibility, and strong local economy and public safety. Together we can write this next chapter and

01:10:30

Giuseppe Niosi: launch the district's come back. I really appreciate it and thank you very much again.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. And councilmember Bonds?

Anita Bonds: Alright, well thank you very much for this opportunity and thanks to those who were listening this evening with us. I want them to know that a vote for Anita is a vote for steady, honest, impactful leadership dedicated to the services of the people of the District of Columbia

01:11:00

Anita Bonds: and that includes enacting reasonable laws, supporting quality living and making community streets and our school safe. It also is about expanding affordable housing citywide and services to our children and our seniors and returning citizens and our most vulnerable residents and working with the community to turn our local economy around for our residents, our workers, and our businesses and so I am

01:11:30

Anita Bonds: asking for your support in the November general election, I'm number five on the ballot and thank you very much for this evening.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Mr. McLaughlin?

Graham McLaughlin: You have seven talented folks who care deeply about the city that you can decide to vote for. I would ask do you want to continue as things are, you have 3 talented councilmembers who, you know what you're going to get from them. They have 8+ years

01:12:00

Graham McLaughlin: each on the council, or you can vote for change. You heard about some of my background at the beginning of this discussion. You've heard all of our answers. I think I have the qualifications to lead in the heart to serve. I would love to think about how we can steward our 19.5-billion-dollar budget, the most per resident of the nation to really create the greatness that this city can be and to support every single person in reaching their full potential. I ask for one of your two votes to represent you and work incredibly

01:12:30

Graham McLaughlin: hard for you as one of your at-large councilmembers.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Mr. Marshall.

Karim Marshall: Thank you, Ms. Rolark Barnes. So, again, my name is Karim Marshall and I'm asking for your vote this November. If you see what I see, and if you feel how I feel

about how this city has gone over the last 8 to 12 years, you know that it's time for a change. We're grateful to the councilmembers who are on this panel for their years of service. However,

01:13:00

Karim Marshall: they're not prepared to do what needs to be done over the next few years to turn this city around. I am. I have more than 12 years of experience in working in the executive. I'm a successful practicing attorney and I've actually worked in delivering programs. I will give you a government that works for you and I promise you, I can promise you right now that if you elect me to council, you will see a level of performance and accountability from this executive that you've never seen before,

01:13:30

Karim Marshall: because I am focused on building partnerships and holding people accountable in a way that allows them to be better and progress moving forward. My name is Karim Marshall. I'm number two on the ballot and I'm asking for your vote this November. Thank You.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you, Mr. Marshall. Councilmember McDuffie?

Kenyan McDuffie: To deliver on the promise of a writer tomorrow for the least amongst us, it really takes someone who has deep roots, someone who cares deeply about the entire city, not just some neighborhoods.

01:14:00

Kenyan McDuffie: You see, for me this isn't just about a job or winning a campaign. I am invested in what happens in DC across all eight wards and I have the professional experience and the legislative [U/A] to back it up. On November 8th, I'm asking you cast one of your two votes for me to ensure that we have leadership that delivers thoughtful solutions to intractable issues and makes our neighborhood safer, giving every resident

opportunity to succeed here in our beautifully diverse city. My vision is one that reflects the

01:14:30

Kenyan McDuffie: visions and views of residents across our city for those healthy, safe neighborhoods, where parents can walk their kids to school and people who want to work can earn a living wage and small business owners can invest in their dreams and open their business. In short it's a city that is more racially equitable, more socially just, and more economically inclusive.

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you, councilmember McDuffie. And Mr. Hill.

Frederick Hill III: Thank you so much for the question and let me say that there is a lot of untruths

01:15:00

Frederick Hill III: that were spoken tonight by Kenyan McDuffie, Elissa Silverman and Anita Bonds, and when you look at them being on the council from between 8 to 12 years, you can also look at the record of these committees that they were part of or chaired and saw that things were going worse every year. I am a person who's not doing this because I need a paycheck, as I said before I'm a very successful businessperson. I don't need that money.

01:15:30

Frederick Hill III: But what I got sick and tired of watching is the people that were working around me or living around me not growing with the economy of this city only because a few people wanted to look out for their friends and exclude a lot of our small business owners. We have over 2000 small businesses, yet 10% of them are in 5 billion dollars of this city's budget every year. So, don't talk to me about how fair you've been or how in

01:16:00

Frederick Hill III: tune you've been with the people in this city. I live it [O/V] [U/A].

Denise Rolark Barnes: Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Hill. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Hill. So, folks that concludes our debate to learn more about how to vote in this election we invite you to visit dcboe.org, that's dcboe.org and remember to visit dcdebates.com to watch this debate

01:16:30

Denise Rolark Barnes: and others in their entirety. We want to thank all of our candidates, our community partners, and the Office of Campaign Finance for hosting tonight's debate, wish you a safe evening and good night.

[1:22:21 END RECORDING DC At-Large Member of the Council Debate Hosted by the Office of Campaign Finance]