

Office Sought:

DC City Council At-Large Seat

Election Day

Primary: June 19, 2018; I ran unopposed on the DC Statehood Green Party (DCSGP) Primary so I am on the November 6 ballot.

General: November 6, 2018

Candidate Name: David Schwartzman

Campaign Website: http://www.dcstategreens.org/david_schwartzman

Biography:

I have been a civil/human rights and peace activist for over 60 years. I participated in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on the Mall in 1963 when Martin Luther King Jr. gave his historic speech. I helped organized the R.I. Peace and Freedom Party in the late 1960a and the Free Angela Davis campaign in Providence R.I. when I was a graduate student at Brown University, getting a PhD in geochemistry in 1971.

I have been a resident in DC since 1976, when I joined the DC Statehood Party the ancestor of the DC Statehood Green Party (DCSGP). I have been a resident in Brightwood neighborhood, Ward 4 since 1977. I was on the Howard University faculty for 39 years, teaching environmental courses. I retired in 2012, now Professor Emeritus. I have been arrested four times; antiwar activities in 1966, later for civil disobedience protesting South African Apartheid, Israeli Apartheid, most recently in the front of the White House against the Keystone XL oil pipeline, organized by 350.org.

I ran for public office in DC in 1998 (DC Statehood Primary for Delegate to the House, 2008 and 2010 (DCSGP, DC Council At-Large), 2012, and 2014 (DCSGP, Shadow Senator). In 2010 my platform included establishing a DC Public Bank and for the last five years I have been a member of the Steering Committee of the DC Public Banking Center. I joined the movement to get DC officially recognized as the nation's first Human Rights City in December 2008 and followed up as a Steering Committee member of the DC Human Rights City Committee which has periodically put out Reports holding our local elected government accountable for its commitment. I am now Chair of Political Policy and Action Committee, DCSGP, and on the Steering Committee. My testimony on behalf of the DCSGP for the last two decades has focused on promoting progressive taxes capable of better meeting the needs of our Black and Brown working class, as well as for DC Statehood and climate justice. I have been a long term member of: ONE DC, Empower DC, the Fair Budget Coalition, Grassroots Planning Coalition, Green Neighbors, Metro DC Democratic Socialists of America (since 2016), DC for Democracy. I am an ecosocialist and scientist focusing on climate change and energy.

If endorsed by the D.C. chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), would you accept our endorsement? Yes, I am seeking it.

Who else has endorsed your campaign?

The DC Statehood Green Party of course, since I won the Primary election (there is about 3500

registered members.

Eugene Puryear, leader of Justice First, DCSGP member, ran on our ballot line in 2014 for Council At-Large; see forwarded email of endorsement.

Jeremiah Lowery: I endorsed him for the Democratic Primary race, see forwarded email of endorsement.

Pending:

I received endorsement by TENAC for my 2014 campaign for Shadow Senator, TENAC is now considering a candidates forum for the Council At-Large seat.

WTU received my questionnaire in August, still is considering an endorsement for the 2nd Council At-Large seat

Overview of fundraising data:

My balance as of August 9, 2018 was \$4,325, with expenditure of \$2,697 for campaign signs. I anticipate a significant increase in my funds this month as a result of meet and greets and a vigorous social media campaign which will include youtube presentations on critical issues. I have greater name recognition across DC than all but the incumbent candidates for Council At-Large because of my longstanding activism, having run for office on five previous occasions and testifying to the DC Council for several decades (first time in 1982). My previous record shows that I get many more votes per dollar spent than the Democratic and Independent candidates (check the OCF filings and our voting record).

As Graham Vyse (DC List, August 15, 2018) said "The most left-wing candidate in the race undoubtedly is the Statehood Green Party's David Schwartzman, a professor emeritus at Howard University." I agree. My DSA membership is a big plus in my campaign, given the dramatic shift to a positive view of socialism as an alternative to the present system of fossil capitalism.

Would you publish our endorsement on your website and literature?

Yes, of course, I already have my membership in Metro DC DSA listed.

If you are endorsed by the Metro DC DSA, will you allow Metro DC DSA Members to wear DSA apparel (like shirts, pins, etc.) while volunteering for your campaign?

Yes

Are you a democratic socialist?

Yes

Are you a member of DSA?

Yes

How long have you been a member of DSA?

Since December 2016

Questionnaire:

Priorities

Name three of your top priorities as an elected official and explain your reasoning:

I am running to empower the struggle for an alternative to trickle -down economics and housing, to champion and implement once in office the critical steps for a better quality of life for all DC residents, but especially for our low-income, working class residents. Reducing income and wealthy inequality is critically important, noting DC has the highest income inequality in the nation compared to the 50 states. As a green socialist, I support redistributing income from the top to the bottom, more socialism, less capitalism. For the many, not the few! Therefore, my three top priorities are the elimination of the most egregious human rights violations in DC, namely child poverty and homelessness, and the creation of truly affordable housing for all, by using mechanisms outside the capitalist market, described in later answers.

Do you support and will you work for a single-payer system, such as Medicare for All?

Yes

Do you support universal and free access to reproductive healthcare for all, including abortion on demand, provision of all contraceptive methods, fertility support, prenatal and obstetric services, and postnatal support for new parents? Do you consider yourself unwavering on all reproductive justice issues?

Yes to both questions

Name examples of public health investments you would support in DC:

Keep Providence Hospital open. The District government should invest in the creation of a new public hospital. Replacing DC General closed down by the Control Board regime is long overdue. Given the high maternal death rate of mainly Black women, public investments in prenatal care are imperative (even a recent Washington Post Editorial recognized this),

Economic Justice

What is your position on Initiative 77--the tipped minimum wage ballot question?

Strongly in support, one of my campaign signs says "Implement Initiative 77, A Living Wage for All!" All on my campaign website.

Do you oppose giving tax subsidies to Amazon to develop, build, and maintain their second headquarters?

Yes, indicated on my website and campaign material.

Do you oppose Amazon building their headquarters here altogether?

Yes, there are much better alternatives, i.e., equitable development.

Would you support increasing the county taxes on the District's wealthiest residents to pay for some of the programs you plan to implement?

Absolutely, this objective has long been a major focus of my political activity, e.g., in testimony to the DC Council, my initiation of the DC Citizens for Tax Justice website, <https://www.dcctj.org>. ITEP has been a long term resource for my advocacy.

Do you support ending the District's banking relationship with Wells Fargo?

Yes ! I supported the initiative to have a Divest Wells Fargo resolution passed by my ANC (4A), with the DC Statehood Green liaison to DC Reinvest leading this effort (Heidi Hansen).

Do you support the District government establishing a public bank?

Yes, I was the first candidate to raise this opportunity in my campaign for DC Council At-Large in 2010, have testified and organized for this goal ever since, and was a founding member and I am on the SC of the DC Public Banking Center (<https://www.dcpublicbanking.org>) for the last 4 years.

What is your position on the legalization of sex work? Do you support the District Council Bill B22-0516 "Reducing Criminalization to Improve Community Safety and Health Amendment Act of 2017?"

I support legalization and the creation of sex-workers unions to protect their health and safety. Likewise, I support B22-0516.

What steps will you take to protect working class people and people of color in the District from displacement and housing insecurity?

I will legislate and organize for curbing public deals/subsidies from DC's revenue going to gentrification and displacement of long-term residents. I will implement strong claw-back for existing projects, with fines going to truly affordable housing for the majority; shift the \$ hundreds of millions for annual subsidies for high rent apartments and condos to low to middle income residents to meet the goal of no more than 30% income going to rent or mortgage expense; strengthen the Comprehensive Plan for residents, block the developers' efforts to weaken it! No Amazon Deal! Bring slumlords to trial for their crimes against tenants!

I will work tirelessly for the repair and expansion of public housing, creating social housing and community land trusts, expand locally funded rent supplements to meet low-income needs, strongly implement Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act (TOPA) and District Opportunity to Purchase Act (DOPA), including using eminent domain to take over slumlord property, and for stronger rent control following the agenda of TENAC. Funding will come from the shift of subsidies for luxury apartments and condos to truly affordable housing as well as hiking the DC income tax rate of wealthy residents, especially millionaires who now pay a lower overall DC tax rate than all but our poorest residents.

What steps will you take to eliminate homelessness in the District?

Short term solution is to expand the provision of rapid rehousing and rent supplements to keep individuals and families in this housing once market rates kick in. Medium and long term solutions include an active role of the DC government to repair and expand public housing, create social housing, fund, together with a DC Public Bank role, coops, community land trusts, and to vigorously implement the Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act, the District Opportunity to Purchase Act, and require much stronger rent control than the present law. Housing is a Human Right, that is my moral and legislative imperative.

Education

What is your position on charter schools in the District?

Charterization is an unwelcome move to undermine DCPS. I support a moratorium on the creation new charter schools. Charter school establishment has resulted in a systematic erosion of the public school system, with charter school agenda being a key component of the failed “education reform” program so enthusiastically promoted by the Federal City Council and its mouthpieces such as the Washington Post. If made fully accountable to our elected government, these schools could serve the public, but not as a replacement of DCPS which should be strengthened once again becoming the dominant school choice. Further, charter school teachers should have the right to organize and join a union. By the way, my younger son, now 35, received an excellent education in DCPS (Ross Elementary, Deal and Wilson).

What is your position on public funding for higher education?

The University of the District of Columbia has long been underfunded, and as a result has not been able to offer many essential program areas. I will legislate and organize for full funding from the DC budget.

Climate and Environment

What steps will you take to transition the District to 100% renewable energy? What timeline do

you envision for achieving 100% renewables?

I am a climate scientist, a climate and energy justice activist and participant in Sustainable DC 1.0 and 2.0. First, we should recognize that DC is now a leader in the transition to renewable energy, but much more needs to be done especially to make environmental justice a reality. Sustainability requires equity. We cannot claim to be a sustainable city without eliminating poverty especially for children. Here are some of my proposals for climate and environmental justice:

Fully fund Solar for All to make a truly just transition to renewable energy. In June 2017, our Mayor joined more than 250 US Mayors in making a commitment to 100% Renewable Energy by 2035. Councilmember Mary Cheh's clean energy bill provides for all electricity from Renewable Energy by 2032. We should move even faster to all DC's energy being supplied by renewable sources. The goal of curbing carbon emissions from transportation is the weak part of the clean energy bill. A shift to electrified public transportation must be implemented. A bottom-up planned congestion charge in downtown DC with revenues transferred to public transit should be considered in the near future. This would be consistent with the Home Rule Charter since it would not single out non-residents, unlike toll collection on bridges for commuters coming into DC. DC's policies regarding energy efficiency should be guided by the excellent IPS report, "Energy Efficiency with Justice" (Sen et al., 2018).

Metro needs a dedicated source of funding. What is the solution you would fight for, so that we can fix our infrastructure and ensure that public transportation is effective, widely available, and affordable?

I support and have collected petitions at Metro stops for Save Our System Coalition (WMATA), which fights for progressive dedicated funding, lower fares and better service, worker rights, against privatization of the Metro system.

On January 31, 2018 I have testified on behalf of the DC Statehood Green Party to WMATA on precisely this issue: "As I testified to you one year ago (January 30, 2017) a progressive dedicated funding stream for metro should be created, relying on taxation of big corporations and wealthy residents, especially millionaires. like Mayor de Blasio proposed for the NYC subway." I proposed 3 main sources of dedicated funding, namely, from taxation of regional wealthy residents, commercial property benefiting from WMATA proximity and a gross receipts tax on regional corporations.

I pointed out that "In 2015, the most recent data available, DC returns with adjusted gross incomes (AGI) of \$1 million and above had a taxable income of \$5.39 billion, while for the same top income bracket MD had a taxable income of \$18.13 billion and VA \$24.71 billion (1). For the WMATA region the total tax income of these millionaires was \$48.2 billion, now likely even higher. A 1% tax on regional millionaire income alone would generate \$482 million!

For residents with AGI \$200 thousand and above the total taxable income was \$12.8 billion in DC, \$61.02 billion in MD and \$83.4 billion in VA, giving a total taxable income of \$157.2 billion. A 1.1 % surtax on this income would generate \$1.8 billion equal to the proposed FY 2019 budget funding from state and local sources. Note that the new federal income tax legislation in 2019 gives these wealthy taxpayers an average tax cut amounting to 1.2 to 3.4 % of their pre-tax income (2), more than a modest 1.1 % surtax that would deliver the total proposed state and local funds amounting to \$1.8 billion

corresponding to the FY 2019 budget. In addition, *DC, MD and VA could generate significant additional revenue by simply recovering the remaining federal tax cut for these wealthy residents, leaving them with the same overall tax burden, state and federal, as if no changes occurred in the tax codes.* For example, in 2019 DC could likely gain \$300 million in more revenue, badly needed for housing and income support for low-income residents, by just hiking the DC income tax payments from the wealthy by 2%. Thus, I urge DC, VA and MD to consider raising their state income rate on wealthy residents, especially millionaires, leaving them with the same overall tax liability, a step to making DC, MD and VA's tax structures more progressive, based on ability to pay."

Update: the 2016 tax data for U.S. states was just released (<https://www.irs.gov/statistics/soi-tax-stats-historic-table-2>). Little change in taxable income from 2015; for DC, MD and VA the taxable income for residents with AGI \$200 thousand and above was \$159.36 billion, for AGI \$1 million and above it was \$47.36 billion. There was a slight drop in millionaire taxable income because of a change in the capital gains law, according to Matt Gardner (ITEP). The taxable income for 2019 will be significantly higher because of the new federal tax law. In addition, the federal tax cut for wealthy residents will increase in 2020 by about 3% according to ITEP.

Civil Rights and Discrimination

What steps do you think are necessary to build a true sanctuary environment for undocumented immigrants in DC?

This is what I say on my campaign website:

"David supports demands for expanded enforcement of laws against wage theft, which disproportionately harms immigrant communities. David is strongly against any cooperation between DC government policing agencies and ICE. No "ICE Holds" for immigrants held at the DC Jail, that is, no reporting of undocumented immigrants to ICE. ***I pledge now and once elected to the DC Council to help organize and participate in civil disobedience if necessary to defend Sanctuary DC.***"

How would you work to combat discrimination against disabled people?

Vigorous enforcement of existing legislation forbidding disability discrimination is imperative, but so is robust public outreach by DC government. I pledge to legislate as necessary and organize against discrimination against disabled people, taking seriously the input of groups and individuals who so advocate. A current example of discrimination against disabled people is found at <https://www.acludc.org/en/news/elderly-deaf-woman-sues-dc-housing-authority-disability-discrimination> (Elderly deaf woman sues D.C. housing authority for disability discrimination).

What is your stance on the criminalization of drugs?

I unequivocally support legalization of drugs with a strong harm reduction program in place including treatment funded by in part by revenue generated by drug sales. My younger son, Sam Junge a social worker in Portland, Oregon, is an expert on this subject who has presented at harm reduction

conferences. He will advise me once elected to the DC Council.

Would you support legislation allowing for legal marijuana business licenses to people previously incarcerated for marijuana possession and/or distribution?

Yes, discrimination against “returning citizens” must end. This is what I say on my campaign website:

“DAVID'S POSITION ON THE RIGHTS OF RETURNING CITIZENS

I support current efforts to restore the DC Board of Parole, restoring local control to parole decisions from the U.S. Parole Commission. I believe this single move can significantly reduce D.C.’s prison population and improve reentry support efforts for returning citizens. This will also improve conditions for Statehood for DC by starting the process of localizing DC’s criminal system from the current federal control.

I support for massive expansion of funding for the Mayor’s Office on Returning Citizen Affairs (MORCA). This office has been grossly underfunded (under \$1 million annually) since it was creating, leaving returning citizens with limited resources for finding housing, employment and social services after they are released.

I do not support for the “Reentry Portal,” which has added millions in additional funding to the Department of Corrections with no vision for how this will improve life for returning citizens. This is a bad idea. This money should be appropriated to MORCA, not the Department of Corrections. I support establishing a comprehensive housing program for returning citizens upon their release from incarceration. No returning citizen, or any DC resident, should be reduced to homelessness.”

Metro DC DSA has recently passed a resolution urging the District to end all exchanges and training partnerships with the Israeli police or military, citing concerns about legalized discrimination in Israel. Will you work to end these partnerships?

I have already joined Occupy Free DC. This is what is stated on my palm cards and campaign website:

“I support the goals of Black Lives Matter and Stop Police Terror Project DC, cut DC Police ties to Israel,

I support the non-violent global BDS campaign, standing in solidarity with Palestinians for equal rights. Our Mayor and Council should too!”

My activism for BDS has included introducing a resolution for divestment from the Occupied Territories which was approved by the vote of the faculty of the College of Arts & Sciences, Howard University in 2007.

Ensuring A People’s Democracy

What is your position on statehood for the District of Columbia?

I joined the struggle for DC Statehood by becoming a member of the DC Statehood Party (now Statehood Green) in 1976 when I moved into DC, and have advocated for this goal ever since.

On June 5, 2008 I testified on behalf of the DCSGP at the Town Hall Meeting with Mr. Doudou Diene, UN Special Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, presenting our Petition for D.C. Statehood and Human Rights, with nearly 2000 signatures.

On July 13, 2009, I initiated and helped lead a delegation of prominent DC Statehood advocates in a meeting with Eleanor Holmes Norton, urging her to introduce a bill for DC Statehood, a goal achieved with the introduction of the New Columbia Admissions Act in the House. I was the Initiator and Co-editor of the Report on State of Human Rights in DC (American Friends Service Committee, <http://afsc.org/resource/report-state-human-rights-dc>) which assessed the human rights record of our local and federal governments since DC self-declared itself as a Human Rights City, on December 10, 2008, the first U.S. city to do so. I continue to serve on the Steering Committee of the DC Human Rights City Committee.

I submitted testimony on the New Columbia Admissions Act, S. 132 to the Senate on Tuesday, September 30, 2014 (<http://greenpapers.net/dc-statehood-now/>). Eugene Puryear and I initiated a National Call-in Day for DC Statehood on October 6, 2014, with a press conference in front of the White House. I have been active in lobbying for the New Columbia Admissions Act in Congress, having participated in several efforts in recent years.

On June 17, 2016, I testified to the so-called constitutional convention convened by the five member New Columbia Statehood Commission and again to the DC Council on September 27, 2016 (see attached testimony), urging the convening of a real elected delegated Constitutional Convention (see my attached educational pdf, widely distributed, on the assessment of this process and our current challenges).

Empowering the struggle for economic, social and environmental human rights is essential to strengthening the statehood movement, thereby creating the base for mass resistance to our colonial status, since the crisis of everyday living for so many of our residents makes it difficult to fully participate. The statehood movement is multidimensional, from the local to the global, but a local mass movement with a capacity for civil disobedience is imperative.

Do you support basic reforms to increase voter registration and participation by working people, including Election Day registration, automatic voter registration, making Election Day a holiday, and increasing opportunities for early voting?

Yes to all.

Do you pledge to accept no money from for-profit corporate donors, for-profit corporate PACs, real estate developers, or lobbyists for for-profit corporations? How will you ensure your donor base is primarily small-dollar donors?

Yes, I so pledge and have never taken such donations in my five electoral campaigns. I will monitor all donations according to their source. The maximum for At-Large candidates is presently \$1000, I look forward to the implementation of the DC Fair Elections law and worked for its passage, including canvassing in Ward 5.

Do you support public financing of elections? If so, which system do you prefer?

Yes, the DC Fair Elections legislation will very likely be implemented for the 2020 election, providing for 5 to 1 matching funds for candidates who forgo corporate donations and raise to the limits indicated (e.g., for DC Council At-Large, \$100 individual contribution). Public financing should be required in all U.S. elections, but this will only occur with the repeal of current Supreme Court rulings (e.g., Citizens United).

Do you favor public ownership of utilities and how would you support and develop policies to increase worker ownership and control of industries?

Yes, I so testified to the Public Service Commission on the Exelon takeover of Pepco, in support of DC Public Power. I pledge to legislate and organize for such an objective, as well as for a much more proactive role of DC government in making worker coops and ownership and control of industries in DC a reality. The establishment of a DC Public Bank should play a big role in making this possible.

This is my commitment: my DC Council office in the Wilson Building will be an organizing center to make DC a truly just community for all, not what we have now, gentrification and displacement of long-term residents. As a retired Howard University professor with a pension and social security I will transfer my Council salary to help fund this organizing.