



GERTRUDE STEIN DEMOCRATIC CLUB

2005-06 POLITICAL PLATFORM

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Introduction

For three decades, the Gertrude Stein Democratic Club (Stein Club) has represented the political voice of a growing LGBT community that believes it is entitled to full participation at all levels of the political process in the District of Columbia. The Stein Club envisions an LGBT community fully integrated in the city's overall political process and actively participating in the creation of public policies that will have an impact on the general well being of our community.

This political platform presents our overall organizational principles and the Stein Club's priorities for 2005-06. Although this platform is by no means an exhaustive list of issues important to the LGBT community, it serves as a blueprint for action based on issue areas identified by the members at a strategy session held in early summer 2005. Therefore, the platform mainly provides a focus and our priorities for the following year to ensure the active involvement of the Stein Club in the city's political process. The platform includes our revised mission, the organization's values, and our priorities organized by issue areas, goals and strategies.

Stein Club's Mission

The Gertrude Stein Democratic Club, founded in 1976, is a membership organization dedicated to growing the political participation, representation, and visibility of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender community in the District of Columbia's political process.

The Stein Club will pursue this mission by representing the voice of the LGBT community in the District's political affairs, playing a leadership role within the DC State Democratic Committee, mobilizing the LGBT community to help elect candidates sympathetic to the LGBT community, and addressing a variety of issues impacting our diverse LGBT community.

Organizational Values

The Stein Club is committed to promoting the following overall organizational principles, which will continue to guide the organization's work in the next two years. These principles guarantee that we are committed and consistent in pursuing our mission.

- The Stein Club is committed to expanding the involvement of our organization, membership and LGBT community in the political and policy decision-making process in the District of Columbia.
- The Stein Club is committed to actively representing the concerns of the LGBT community within the DC State Democratic Party and addressing the impact of government-based policies on the well being of our community.
- The Stein Club is the voice of the LGBT democratic community and takes into consideration the diversity of our community when we speak.
- The Stein Club is committed to ensuring that our membership is representative of the diversity of our community and that diversity is also represented in our leadership.
- The Stein Club recognizes the importance of developing positive working relationships with other LGBT organizations in the community and is committed to collaborating on areas of mutual concern.

2005-06 Goals and Strategies

Election of Candidates Supportive of the LGBT Community

Goal: Elect a Mayor of the District of Columbia who is committed to working with the LGBT community and supporting our issues.

Strategies:

1. Hold a Mayoral Forum in 2006 to learn about the candidates' positions on specific issues affecting the LGBT community, as well as their general vision for the District of Columbia, and ensure that there is direct dialogue with our community.
2. Ensure that our Mayoral endorsement meeting, to be held after the forum, will have the greatest possible membership participation.
3. Mobilize LGBT voters to help elect the endorsed candidate of the Stein Club.

Goal: Ensure the election of a Chair of the Council of the District of Columbia (City Council) and Council Members who are supportive of the LGBT community and committed to addressing our issues.

Strategies:

1. Hold a City Council Chair and City Council Ward Races Forum in 2006 to engage the candidates and community in dialogue on how the City Council can better address issues affecting the LGBT community.
2. Following the forum, hold a City Council Chair and ward races endorsement meeting.
3. Mobilize LGBT voters to help elect the endorsed candidates of the Stein Club.

Goal: Increase the number of LGBT ANC Commissioners.

Strategies:

1. Sponsor a panel with current and former LGBT ANC Commissioners to promote greater participation of LGBT individuals running for ANC.
2. Identify ANCs in which the LGBT community is underrepresented and identify candidates the Stein Club will support.

Goal: Increase the number of Board of Education members who are either LGBT or supportive of LGBT issues.

Strategies:

1. Hold a Stein Club endorsement meeting for Board of Education candidates.
2. Work with the Mayor's Office to submit qualified LGBT persons to be appointed to the Board of Education.
3. Publicize the Stein Club's endorsement of candidates for Board of Education.

Increase the number of LGBT individuals appointed to upper level management and policy-level positions and to Boards/Commissions within the DC Government.

Goal: Increase the number of LGBT appointed officials to Boards and Commissions throughout the District of Columbia Government.

Strategies:

1. Establish a task force on Boards and Commissions within the Stein Club and work with the Office of LGBT Affairs to identify openings and support the appointment of LGBT individuals.
2. Share information about vacancies with the general membership through the Stein's website and special mailings.

Goal: Increase the number of LGBT appointed officials in high-level policy positions, including a Deputy Mayor, within the District of Columbia Government.

Strategies:

1. Identify qualified candidates for specific positions, and submit them to the Administration for consideration.
2. Work with the Administration so that they understand the importance of appointing qualified and "out" high-level policy and management people.

Office of LGBT Affairs

Goal: Ensure the creation, through legislation, of the Office of LGBT Affairs as a cabinet-level, well-funded office within the Mayor's Office of the District of Columbia Government. **[See update below].**

Strategies:

1. Support the passage of legislation to establish the Office of LGBT Affairs introduced in the City Council by Councilmember Jim Graham. **[The City Council passed the legislation to establish the Office of GLBT Affairs during its January 4, 2006 legislative session. The Stein Club was actively involved in ensuring the passage of the legislation].**
2. Work with the Mayor's Office, City Administrator and City Council to ensure appropriate funding for the Office of LGBT Affairs.
3. Ensure the appointment of a permanent Director of the Office of LGBT Affairs within the first three months of the new administration in 2007.
4. Advocate for the appointment of a Director (even if interim) of the Office of LGBT Affairs by the current Mayor to serve until January 2007. **[Mayor Williams has appointed a Director of the Office of GLBT Affairs, and the Stein Club looks forward to working with the new director].**
5. Mobilize support within the LGBT community and Stein Club's membership to ensure the establishment of the Office of LGBT Affairs. **[As part of our strategy to ensure the passage of this legislation, the Stein Club worked with several GLBT community-based organizations as part of a coalition and provided a unity statement to the City Council].**

Goal: Work with the Office of LGBT Affairs to support efforts geared toward addressing issues impacting the LGBT community in areas such as: domestic violence, services for LGBT seniors, LGBT families, transgender rights, and domestic partnership benefits.

Strategy:

1. Ensure the participation of the Stein Club on the Advisory Committee of the Office of LGBT Affairs.

Human Rights Policy and Enforcement

Goal: Ensure passage of legislation to include gender identity and expression under protected categories within the DC Human Rights Act. **[See update below]**

Strategies:

1. Support Bill “Human Rights Act Clarification Act of 2005,” introduced by Councilmember Vincent Orange, intended to clarify the intent of the DC Human Rights Act and include gender identity and expression as protected category, which will serve to provide better protection of the human rights of transgender individuals.
2. Collaborate with other community-based organizations and advocates to ensure the Stein Club’s participation in a wider coalition in support of the legislation.
3. Provide testimony in favor of the passage of the legislation and work with the Commission on Human Rights and the Office of Human Rights to ensure the effective implementation of the Human Rights Act to protect the rights of GLBT individuals.

[The City Council passed this legislation at their December 6, 2005 legislative session. The Stein Club testified in support of this legislation in the Summer 2005 and continued to support efforts to ensure its passage].

4. **The Stein Club will collaborate with other community-based organizations and advocates to ensure the implementation of the new protections for transgender individuals by the Office of Human Rights.**

Goal: Advocate for training on human rights, cultural competency, and LGBT diversity for all District Government’s employees at all levels and in all agencies.

Strategies:

1. Work with the Mayor’s Office, Office of LGBT Affairs, Commission on Human Rights, Office of Human Rights, and District Agencies to ensure the inclusion of LGBT cultural competency and diversity issues in employee training.
2. Ensure that District Agencies, especially those with more direct contact with the overall LGBT community such as MPD, Fire Department, Employment Services, HIV/AIDS Administration, and Human Services, comply with the DC Language Access Act and continuously improve access for LGBT individuals.

Goal: Ensure that District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) fully comply with human rights requirements to protect LGBT students from discrimination, harassment and hate crimes.

Strategy:

1. Work with the Board of Education and the Mayor’s Office to ensure that DCPS fully complies with local human rights policies and adopts and implement a system-wide policy to prevent harassment of LGBT students.
2. Ensure that DCPS guarantees access for its students and staff to accurate information and education provided by community-based organizations on critical issues such as health education and youth development.

Goal: Support efforts to ensure voting rights for the District of Columbia.

Strategy:

1. Work within the DC Democratic State Committee, and with local organizations, to support efforts to ensure voting rights for the District of Columbia.

Goal: Continue to act as an advocate on a wide range of issues including those related to discrimination, housing and employment, businesses, access to government contracts and zoning regulations where they have a direct impact on the LGBT community.

Strategy:

1. Work with the Office on LGBT Affairs to ensure that its strategic plan addresses disparities in terms of equal access in these areas of concern to LGBT individuals and businesses.

Parity in Funding for Community-Based Service Providers in HIV/AIDS, Substance Abuse, Mental Health, and Lesbian Health Issues.

Goal: Advocate for the adoption by the District of Columbia Government of an equitable policy that will guide the identification and disbursement of emergency and planned funding for HIV/AIDS, Substance Abuse, Mental Health, and Lesbian Health Issues.

Strategies:

1. Pass a resolution supporting the adoption of an equitable process for the identification and awarding of funds to community-based HIV/AIDS service providers working with diverse LGBT communities in the District.
2. Ensure DC government parity in funding for substance abuse prevention education and outreach campaigns.
3. Support increased funding for LGBT youth services and efforts to find an LGBT specific runaway shelter.