



JEWES UNITED
FOR **JUSTICE**
CAMPAIGN FUND

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
GENERAL ELECTION 2018
VOTER GUIDE

THINK JEWISHLY.
VOTE LOCALLY.

ENDORSEMENTS

DC Council

At Large:

Elissa Silverman

Ward 1:

Brianne Nadeau

Ward 5:

Kenyan McDuffie

Ward 6:

Charles Allen

Attorney General: **Karl Racine**

DC State Board of Education

Ward 1:

Emily Gasoi

Ward 3:

Ruth Wattenberg

Ward 5:

Zachary Parker

Ward 6:

Joe Weedon

Our criteria for endorsement:

Social & Economic Justice Agenda
Commitment to Racial Equity
High Ethical Standards
Electability

The Jews United for Justice Campaign Fund is a grassroots community organization working for affordable housing, good jobs, racial equity, and other issues of social justice in DC and Maryland by electing officials and holding them accountable to our shared agenda.

As Jews, we are called by our history and our tradition to repair the world, by working to ensure that:

- **everyone has what they need** to live and thrive
- **all people live in dignity and have a voice in democracy,** no matter the color of our skin or how much money we have
- **our government focuses on the needs of the most vulnerable people in our society,** not the wallets of the wealthiest people and their businesses' profits

The JUFJ Campaign Fund's grassroots election team of volunteers and staff undertook an extensive process to identify candidates who share our priorities and values. For the June 2018 primary and November 2018 general elections, our organizational leaders extensively examined where leading candidates stand on a social justice agenda.

Our endorsement committee represents our membership, staff, board, and community partners. They reviewed detailed questionnaires, conducted group candidate interviews, and consulted with a diverse group of local progressive advocates, activists, and longtime JUFJ Campaign Fund partners and allies.

This voter guide seeks to help voters make a difference at the ballot box, and to put real progressive policy on the DC agenda.

Learn more about the JUFJ Campaign Fund and our endorsements at www.jufjcampaignfund.org

DC ELECTIONS 101

Real policy change involves elected officials at all levels of local government. DC is not like any other city, because we are also, in many ways, a state (without federal representation, though our population is larger than Vermont's or Wyoming's). Our Mayor has many of the powers of a Governor, and the DC Council also functions as a state legislature. Together they are in charge of things as small as potholes and as large as the budget, healthcare policy, employment law, etc.

There are 13 DC Councilmembers: one for each of the eight Wards, four At-Large Members who represent the entire District, and a Chair. Two of the At-Large positions must be filled by people who are *not* the majority party on the Council (almost always the Democrats).

DC also has a neighborhood-level system of government called the **Advisory Neighborhood Commissions (ANCs)**. Non-partisan, elected commissioners can recommend neighborhood improvements and provide input on issues of concern to the Council. There are 40 ANCs across the city, varying in size from 2 to 12 commissioners. Each commissioner represents about 2,000 residents, and there are 296 commissioners total.

The **State Board of Education** oversees specific areas of DC's public schools. It has nine members, one for each Ward and one At-Large Member. There's a shift underway in our education system, with the potential for more power in the hands of the elected State Board and less in the hands of the Mayor, and we feel strongly that our endorsed candidates will use the full authority and influence of the State Board to support students, parents, and teachers in all our public schools.

DC has one Delegate to the House of Representatives, since 1990 Eleanor Holmes Norton, who serves on committees, but cannot vote on legislation in committee or on the floor of the House. We have one Shadow Representative and two Shadow Senators who advocate for statehood but who are not seated in Congress.

To find your Ward and ANC, visit dcatlas.dcgis.dc.gov/mar

ENDORSEMENT COMMITTEE



Rachel Anderson



Jacob Feinspan
staff



Seth Johnson



Sarah Novick
staff



Daniel Solomon



Michelle Sternthal



Tac Tacoslosky



Ericka Taylor



Hannah Weilbacher

DC COUNCIL AT-LARGE

Elissa Silverman



elissa2018.com

A fierce proponent of DC's groundbreaking paid family and medical leave law, a loud voice on behalf of workers' rights, and a leader on affordable housing.

On the Council, Elissa has worked tirelessly to support renters, seniors, and low-income residents, fighting for unemployment insurance, rental subsidies, and public transit. She has stood up against tax cuts and giveaways to the wealthiest people and businesses in the District, cuts that took funding away from these vital programs. And she makes sure the Mayor's administration is accountable to voters by focusing fiercely on agency oversight.

On our recent **DC Council scorecard**, Elissa stood out as the Councilmember who is doing the absolute most to move DC forward. She takes no corporate or PAC campaign donations. Her partnership and moral leadership have been invaluable, and we look forward to working with her throughout her next term.

On the opponents: Dionne Reeder, a business owner explicitly running because of her opposition to paid family and medical leave, declined to be interviewed. Her campaign is overwhelmingly funded by lobbyists and business owners that oppose all legislation that expands workers' rights.

As Chair of the Housing Committee, Councilmember Anita Bonds stalled crucial legislation to help renters in her committee and championed a bill that undermined the rights of tenants in single-family homes. She announced in a candidate forum during the primary that she wants to exclude many people from DC's paid family and medical leave program. The other candidates in the race have little chance of winning.

In this race, you can vote for two candidates. **We recommend you vote ONLY for Elissa Silverman.**

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Karl Racine



Using the power of his office to protect vulnerable residents, especially people of color and those who are struggling with poverty.

At a time when justice seems out of reach for many immigrants and Black and brown residents, Attorney General Racine has been a true fighter for justice in DC. He stands up for DACA recipients, including filing lawsuits to protect them from the federal government's assaults. And he's spearheaded a group of Democratic attorneys general from

karlracine.com

across the country working together to share resources and strategy on resisting the cruel and unacceptable policies of the Trump Administration.

As the first independent Attorney General of the District, Karl has prioritized major reforms to the juvenile justice system. The AG's diversion program has been essential in keeping thousands of young people out of prison, instead directing them toward the social services and support they need.

Attorney General Racine's efforts on behalf of tenants led to the expulsion of notorious slumlord Sanford Capital from the District. And he has worked with community partners to ensure all workers receive the wages and benefits they earn, and don't lose money to dishonest employers who deny them their legal rights.

We hope to work with Karl in a second term to expand on these efforts, and to make sure that everyone in DC, white, Black, or brown, has access to real justice.

MAYOR

No Endorsement

In a time when the District needs a visionary leader, Mayor Bowser has chosen to move cautiously, to delay and obstruct popular policy change, and to pick fights with progressive legislators. In a city whose voters are more than ready to prioritize the needs of the people struggling to make it here, community leaders and advocates have had to struggle to pass progressive policies, then struggle again to fund and implement them.

Mayor Muriel Bowser has led DC forward on some notable policies, but she has also held the District back in many ways. We appreciate the Mayor's increasing investments in affordable housing, and her attention to maternal and child health. She supported increasing the minimum wage, but opposed fair and equal wages for tipped workers. She funded our new Fair Elections program only under significant pressure. While the Mayor played a critical role in closing the dilapidated DC General homeless shelter, her initial plan to do so gave massive concessions to developers who supported her campaign.

Most troublingly, Mayor Bowser is a highly vocal opponent of the paid family and medical leave program. She used the powers of her office and her administration to oppose the program at every stage, and is openly working to unseat Elissa Silverman, who has been its strongest champion on the Council. Mayor Bowser endorsed Dionne Reeder, who is running for Council explicitly against paid family leave, and who has repeatedly made false claims about the costs and mechanisms of the program. Bowser previously supported another candidate, S. Kathryn Allen, who committed massive signature fraud and was dropped from the ballot. We are astounded at the lengths that the Mayor will go to upend a massively popular, well-designed, and badly needed program.

As she has no viable challenger, we hope that over the next four years we can work more productively with Mayor Bowser.

DC COUNCIL CHAIR

No Endorsement

Council Chair Phil Mendelson declined to return our questionnaire during the primary election this spring, and so we were not able to engage in an endorsement process with him.

Mendelson has been a complicated leader. He sees himself as a practical consensus-builder, but too often that means he needlessly compromises progressive ideals and values that we hold central. He is masterful in using his role on the Council - to stand up to the Mayor, to provide strong oversight over her Administration, to shepherd legislation through the process, and to deploy Council committee assignments so as to reward and empower his Council allies. Though he is responsive to hearing from residents and advocates, and often willing to consult with a wide range of people about solutions, he rarely changes his mind once it's made up.

Chairman Mendelson played a key leadership role in creating DC's landmark paid family and medical leave program, but he subsequently attempted to undermine it. In 2017 he proposed a "moratorium" on pro-worker legislation, citing business lobbyists' complaints about paid family leave, minimum wages, and fair scheduling (which he didn't advance). His words emboldened Republican state senators in Maryland in their attempt to block sick leave legislation. We worked alongside Chairman Mendelson to increase DC's minimum wage, but he was the chief architect of the Initiative 77 repeal, undermining the will of the voters who passed it and forcing thousands of tipped workers to continue working for the tipped wage of \$3.89 an hour.

When he's with us, he's a decisive and skillful shepherd of the legislative process, but when he's against us, he's equally decisive and skillful at blocking progress. Given that he has no viable challenger in this election, we hope that in the next four years we will be able to persuade Chairman Mendelson to be with us more often.

WARD I COUNCIL

Brianne Nadeau



A strong record of supporting affordable housing, economic justice, and accountable government, with one of the highest scores on our recent [Council voting record scorecard](#).

briannefordc.com

and prioritizing services for struggling DC residents over tax cuts for millionaires and businesses.

Councilmember Nadeau has been a key partner with progressive organizations in DC in advancing affordable housing, creating a paid family and medical leave program,

Councilmember Nadeau was a vocal supporter of fair scheduling rules for part-time workers against opposition from many of her colleagues. She supported JUFJ's efforts to turn the former Hebrew Home for the Aged into truly affordable housing. Brianne voted to uphold Initiative 77, which would have required one fair minimum wage and ended the \$3.89/hour wage for tipped workers. Her first term on the Council has demonstrated her commitment to smart, effective policies that improve the lives of all Ward I residents.

WARD I STATE BOARD OF ED

Emily Gasoi



The teacher and advocate we need on the State Board of Education.

Emily has over 20 years of significant and relevant experience standing with students, parents, and teachers. She has been both a classroom teacher and a teacher mentor.

emily4education.com

families have a real choice about where to send their children. She has smart ideas to engage constituents and leverage the State Board of Education's power to make it a real force for accountability in our schools.

Emily is running to strengthen our neighborhood schools so that

On the opponents: Both Jason Andrean and Callie Kozlak are qualified candidates, but neither made a compelling case that they would make a better State Board of Education member than Emily. Emily's decades of education experience made her stand out among a strong field of candidates.

There's a shift underway in DC education, with the potential for more power in the hands of the elected State Board and less in the hands of the Mayor. Our endorsed candidates strongly support students, parents, and teachers in all our public schools.

Learn more about what's at stake in the SBOE election, including candidate profiles and in-depth reporting, at jufjcampaignfund.org/sboe

WARD 3 COUNCIL

No Endorsement

Councilmember Mary Cheh declined to return our questionnaire during the primary this spring, and so we were not able to engage in an endorsement process with her.

We endorsed Councilmember Cheh in 2014, and she has been an ally on affordable housing, fair scheduling, and supporting tipped workers. But she has also been a swing vote, at times aligned with our agenda and at other times opposing it. In 2016 and 2017 she was a leader in attempting to repeal and replace the paid family and medical leave program, and she supported major tax cuts for the wealthy in 2015, 2016, and 2017. More recently, Councilmember Cheh has introduced aggressive and badly-needed environmental legislation that would halve DC's greenhouse gas emissions by 2032 and put us on a path to being carbon neutral by 2050. She also was the primary Council supporter of Initiative 77, which would have ended the \$3.89/hour wage for tipped workers but was overturned by a majority vote of her colleagues.

We expect Councilmember Cheh to be re-elected and we look forward to working with her over the next four years.

WARD 3 STATE BOARD OF ED

Ruth Wattenberg



Fighting for real education for our children, not standardized testing.

Over the past four years, Ruth Wattenberg has been a proven advocate for equity in education, including strengthening DC public schools, demanding transparency from the Mayor, and minimizing the use of test scores in school ratings.

ruth4schools2018.com Ruth understands that test score statistics reflect whether students come from rich or poor families, not their academic abilities or their teachers' performance. Relying on test scores narrows what we allow children to learn, and forces educators to focus on testing, not teaching. Ruth has a strong record of using her position for oversight.

On the opponent: Challenger Dora Currea did not make a compelling case that she would be a more effective board member than the incumbent.

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WARD 5 COUNCIL

Kenyan McDuffie



A champion of racial justice and criminal justice reform, and author of the groundbreaking NEAR Act.

The NEAR Act addresses DC's serious problems with racially biased policing and racist police brutality by treating violence and policing as matters of public health and investing in community engagement. Kenyan

kenyanmcduffie2018.com

also played key roles in advancing juvenile justice reform, campaign

finance reform, and the Fair Elections legislation that will make running for office more accessible for candidates without corporate backers.

Councilmember McDuffie has been a swing vote on many issues, at times aligning with the JUFJ Campaign Fund's priorities, and at other times, voting against our core economic and social justice agenda. He supported tax cuts for DC's wealthiest residents and businesses in 2015, 2016, and 2017, though in 2018 he supported Councilmember Allen's proposal to protect DC from the disastrous Republican tax bill, prioritizing DC's social services, education, and other programs over further enriching the wealthiest few. He voted to overturn the will of the District's voters and repeal Initiative 77, which would have ended the \$3.89/hour wage for tipped workers and created one equal minimum wage. But he has also championed protecting affordable housing through badly-needed regulation of short-term rentals (AirBnB) and supports fair treatment for people who don't pay for Metro rides.

We look forward to working with the Councilmember in his next term toward racial and economic justice for all, especially the poor Black and brown families who bear the brunt of systemic racism and disinvestment.

WARD 5 STATE BOARD OF ED

Zachary Parker



The educator we need overseeing our public school system.

Zach has fought education inequity for the last 10 years as a teacher and as a coach for principals and other administrators. His extensive experience working with students, teachers, and administrators gives him a perspective on education that takes into account multiple stakeholders.

votezacharyparker.com

Zach knows that our broken teacher evaluation system is forcing out some of our most effective teachers by measuring the wrong things. He wants to make sure that any proposed new charter schools are thoroughly vetted before we turn our children over to them.

On the opponent: Adrian Jordan is a qualified candidate, but he did not make a compelling case that he would make a more effective State Board of Education member than Zachary.

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WARD 6 COUNCIL

Charles Allen



Working hard to bring affordable housing to Ward 6, which has created the most units of any Ward over the past three years.

Councilmember Allen championed the recently passed Fair Elections legislation, which will provide matching funds to candidates who rely on small donors instead of large corporate donations. This is a key step towards the District being able to elect leaders who reflect

charlesallen2018.com

the best of our diverse city and who are accountable to voters rather than corporate and developer donors. Charles has also been a strong supporter of paid family and medical leave, as well as other legislation to improve the lives of all working families, white, Black, and brown.

We objected to Councilmember Allen's 2016 votes for tax cuts for businesses and multimillionaires, and we applaud his proposal, just passed in the 2019 budget, to decouple DC's estate tax from the federal estate tax in the wake of the Republican tax scam. This policy will protect revenue that is desperately needed for programs like affordable housing and paid family leave from disappearing into the wallets of the wealthiest. He has also led on campaign finance reform, most recently advancing legislation that would limit pay-to-play campaign contributions by contractors doing business with the District. Charles also backs decriminalization of fare evasion and has advanced it through his committee, and supports the NEAR Act. He voted to uphold Initiative 77, one fair wage for tipped workers.

We are eager to help Councilmember Allen expand his work for affordable housing and fair elections in his next term.

WARD 6 STATE BOARD OF ED

Joe Weedon



A public school parent and a strong, independent voice for our children.

As a member of the State Board, Joe helped establish Serve Your City, supporting after school programming for students across DC. He is the only State Board member who has kids currently enrolled in a neighborhood public school.

joeweedon.com

Along with Ward 3 member Ruth Wattenberg and Ward 8 member Markus Batchelor, Joe has a proven record of standing up to the administration's PR spin about how quickly our schools are improving.

On the opponent: Challenger Jessica Sutter did not make a compelling case that she would be a more effective board member than the incumbent.

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EARLY VOTING

Vote early at **any** Early Voting Center, then join us on Election Day to get out the vote!

Starting **Monday, October 22:**

8:30 AM - 7 PM

One Judiciary Square ([4th & E NW](#))

Friday, **October 26** - Friday, **November 2:**

8:30 AM - 7 PM

Barry Farm Recreation Center ([Sumner & Wade SE](#))

Benning Stoddert Community Center ([Stoddert & E Capitol SE](#))

Chevy Chase Community Center ([Connecticut & McKinley NW](#))

Cleveland Park Library ([Connecticut & Macomb NW](#))

Columbia Heights Community Center ([15th & Girard NW](#))

Deanwood Community Center & Library ([49th & Quarles NE](#))

Emery Heights Community Center ([Georgia & Madison NW](#))

King Greenleaf Recreation Center ([Delaware & N SW](#))

Malcolm X Opportunity Center ([13th & Alabama SE](#))

Sherwood Recreation Center ([10th & GNE](#))

Takoma Community Center ([3rd & Van Buren NW](#))

Trinidad Recreation Center ([Childress & Orren NE](#))

Turkey Thicket Recreation Center ([Michigan & Quincy NE](#))

Election Day: **Tuesday, November 6**

find your polling place at bit.ly/votedc2018

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**Join us to take action at
www.jufjcampaignfund.org**

Paid for by the JUFJ Campaign Fund
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Washington, DC 20005.
Joe Sandler, Treasurer.

A copy of our report is filed with the Director of Campaign
Finance of the District of Columbia Board of Elections.