

THE JACK WE KNOW

The undersigned residents of the District are opposed to the removal of Councilman Jack Evans from the Council of the District of Columbia by his fellow Councilmembers. Doing so would rob the thousands of Ward 2 residents of their elected voice for the entirety of 2020. We wholeheartedly agree with Colbert King that “expulsion would subject voters in Ward 2 to the same injustice imposed by Congress on the District: a denial of voting representation...” (*The Washington Post*, November 9, 2019).

We also believe, as formal investigations proceed, there is merit in sharing with you the Jack Evans we know.

Many of us have known Jack since the late '70's, long before he was elected to the Council, when he was a young attorney with the US Securities and Exchange Commission and, choosing to live in DC, became actively involved in civic and community matters. He was an ever-enthusiastic participant, whether in Councilman John Wilson's neighborhood efforts, the District's Mayor and Congressman's softball leagues, the newly established Advisory Neighborhood Commissions, or the DC Democratic State Committee. He was elected ANC Commissioner in the '80's and his neighbors remember him leading the charge to prevent Connecticut Avenue north of Dupont Circle from becoming another “K” Street, saving that neighborhood and its beautiful architecture for posterity. Later in the '80's, he was elected to the DC Democratic State Committee from Ward 2 and then elected by the Committee as its Treasurer, pulling it out of arrears and non-compliance with the Federal Election Commission. All of this was as a volunteer, extra-curricular to his professional life and family, and at his initiative – looking out for others in our community.

His effectiveness in community activities was noted, resulting in his '91 special election to the DC Council from Ward 2 from among 15 well-qualified candidates, replacing the highly-regarded John A. Wilson who had been elected Council Chairman.

One of the first things Jack did as the newly elected Ward 2 Councilmember was to insist that WMATA compensate Mr. Archie, the owner of a neighborhood-serving cleaners on 7th Street in Shaw who was nearly put out of business during the construction of the Metro. Jack continued his work in Shaw, a community at the time that was beset with crime and drugs. Jack worked with neighborhood leaders to establish a community task force consisting of rival drug gangs, police, city agency heads and community leaders that met regularly for months, which helped put an end to the ongoing drug wars that were plaguing the neighborhood. One of the most tangible results from that effort was the restoration of the Robert F. Kennedy Recreation Center on 7th Street, which became an active community center (and still is today), where children in the neighborhood returned to play and midnight basketball took the place of drug wars. More recently, Jack was instrumental in bringing the City Market at “O” to reality, helping to continue his belief in the historic greatness of Shaw. Similarly, in response to the ongoing prostitution problems in

downtown and Logan Circle, he formed a task force including MPD, the attorney general's office and community leaders to find creative ways to address the problem.

Jack was then and continues to be a strong supporter of the LGBTQ community. Jack championed equal rights for the LGBTQ community when most elected officials were afraid to do so. In his first year on the Council, Jack led the fight to abolish anti-sodomy laws. He was the first elected DC official to publicly support same-sex marriage and as a result, DC was one of the first cities to make it legal. He sponsored legislation granting LGBTQ people the rights of adoption, health care, inheritance and domestic partnership. He waged the battles to enact medical marijuana, condom availability in public schools, bias-related hate crimes, LGBTQ sensitivity training for Metropolitan police, fire, and EMT personnel and within our correctional facilities, needle exchange programs. During the early years of the AIDS epidemic, Jack was on the frontline securing funding for treatment, prevention, and research programs, while providing comfort to those struck down by the disease. It may seem ordinary now but without Jack's leadership many of these hard fought rights would have been delayed.

The list of projects that exist today throughout Ward 2 because of Jack's leadership is lengthy. A few examples include: renovated libraries in the West End, Shaw, Downtown (MLK) and Georgetown; community parks in Dupont Circle, Logan Circle, Sheridan-Kalorama and West End; renovated schools in Georgetown, Foggy Bottom, Logan Circle and West End; funding for Foggy Bottom and Georgetown Villages; establishment of Business Improvement Districts, Main Streets and Clean Team programs; funding for Franklin Square, the Georgetown Waterfront, the Dupont Underground and the Dupont Overpass. Jack fought against a proposal by the then-chancellor to permanently close both Garrison and Francis Schools. Jack mandated pre-job training for District residents so they would qualify for jobs in the hospitality industry when the Convention Center and Headquarters Marriott Marquis opened. And, Ward 2 has some of the best dog parks in the city and the most bike lanes of any Ward, all built with funding Jack secured.

These Ward 2 achievements are in addition to major economic developments to which Jack's finance expertise contributed. As Finance Committee chair, Jack has overseen the District's climb to receiving a Triple AAA bond rating on Wall Street, which lowers the interest on the debt DC taxpayers pay on borrowing. Further, the construction of Capital One Arena, the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, Nationals Stadium, the Marriott Marquis, which serves as the headquarters hotel for the Convention Center, all contribute to the quality of life for DC residents. The revenue spin-off from these projects has allowed the city to renovate schools, recreation centers and libraries all across the city as well as support the building of needed affordable housing.

What runs throughout Jack's long service as a Councilmember is his commitment to the residents of Ward 2 and, indeed, the District of Columbia, whether responding to their needs and requests or foreseeing structural ways to create the environment for

a vibrant economy serving the public good. This has been his strong suit from day one -- from when he first helped Mr. Archie to today, helping individuals such as a dog walker with tax issues, changing the law to allow theaters to have outdoor cafes, or refurbishing parks for children, families and community.

As we bask in the glory of our World Series Championship and the reality of a rejuvenated, fiscally sound District of Columbia, let's not forget that Jack was central to these successes.

This is the Jack we know.

With thoughtful consideration, we are:

Lisa Amore (Ward 2)
Charlie Bengel, Jr (Ward 2)
MaryEva Candon (Ward 2)
Paul Cohn (Ward 2)
Bernard Demczuk (Ward 2)
Bill Dugan (Ward 2)
Curtis Fallon (Ward 2)
Bart Gordon (Ward 2)
Linda Grigsby
Carmen Kinsey
John E. Lazar (Ward 2)
Sandy & Howard Marks
Pat Morrison
John Ralls
Michael Ramirez
Jacqueline (Mrs. Charles) Reed (Ward 2)
Jonathan J. ten Hoopen (Ward 2)
"Mahdi" Leroy J. Thorpe, Jr. & spouse Aissatou Drame
David W. Wilmot
Gerald V. Yuille (Ward 2)