



A PROJECT OF MOTHER'S OUTREACH NETWORK

## DC Guaranteed Income Coalition Petition Letter and FAQs

May 28, 2021

Dear Friends,

The Covid-19 pandemic has laid bare and intensified the economic marginalization of Black and Latinx communities in Washington, DC and across the country. On behalf of the DC Guaranteed Income Coalition, we request that you and your organization sign the petition [here: https://bit.ly/DCGIPetition](https://bit.ly/DCGIPetition). This petition urges DC Mayor Muriel Bowser to join an organization, [Mayors for a Guaranteed Income](#) (MGI), as one demonstration of support for a guaranteed income for the residents of the District of Columbia. In 1968, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King called guaranteed income “the solution to poverty”: It puts meaningful monthly payments in the hands those of us who need it. Yes, extra cash payments may negatively affect a recipient’s existing public benefits and yes, funding these income transfer programs is not simple. However, joining MGI is one compelling step of many the Mayor could take to explore reform of our existing income policies. It is one step toward tackling the staggering poverty and economic inequality running amok in our city.

### Organizations that have signed on

These organizations have signed on to the petition.

- [Bread for the City](#)
- [Brookland Manor Coalition](#)
- [if, A Foundation for Radical Possibilities](#)
- [DC Action](#)
- [DC Statehood Green Party](#)
- [Diverse City Fund](#)
- [Empower DC](#)
- [DC Fiscal Policy Institute](#)
- [Greater Washington Community Foundation](#)
- [Horning Family Fund.](#)
- [LIFT-DC](#)
- [One DC](#)
- [ROC-DC](#)
- [Save Us Now!](#)

- [Serve Your City](#)
- [Southeast Ministry](#)
- [SW DC Action](#)
- [THRIVE East of the River](#)

## **Mayors for a Guaranteed Income**

More than thirty-five American mayors have joined Mayors for a Guaranteed Income, and for good reason. Membership makes a mayor's city eligible for \$500,000 in funds for pilot programs. (See [this article](#) in Bloomberg). Mayors who joined Mayors for a Guaranteed Income see numerous advantages to membership. Mayor Bowser can anticipate similar benefits.

First, participating is a commitment to the study of, support for, and willingness to move toward guaranteed income for District of Columbia residents.

Second COVID-19 has exposed and exacerbated the economic racial divide in the city and across the country, and the combination of federal stimulus payments and local CARES Act grants have shown the power of direct cash payments to alleviate and prevent poverty.

Finally, there is a deep-seated and robust movement of people in DC and across the country who want change, and guaranteed income is a powerful force for catalyzing attention, infrastructure, and resources for this change.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

There are several possible challenges around universal basic income programs.

***Which do we pursue: Universal Basic Income or Guaranteed Income?*** Universal Basic Income implies everyone would receive a payment regardless of their financial status; joining Mayors For a Guaranteed Income is a commitment to exploring to what extent guaranteed income should be provided to everyone or to a targeted group. The DC Guaranteed Income Coalition is committed to a process of targeted guaranteed income and to exploring other measures for ensuring that everyone is eligible for a guaranteed income should they need it.

***What is the impact of direct payments on the existing safety net benefits of recipients?*** This is an urgent policy issue that we are exploring, and we believe that there are measures and support for measures to mitigate and indeed eliminate negative impacts. We welcome your involvement in our study of these issues and your support for advocacy to make the needed policy changes to address them.

***Who should receive Guaranteed Income funds?*** We support a racially equitable selection process to fund multiple Guaranteed Income pilots in DC. Pilot programs provide money to a select group of people as a test of their impact on people's welfare.

***Who should fund guaranteed income pilots? Why are we asking the Mayor to be involved?*** We support the use of private sources, in the short term, to fund direct cash pilots, and public funding, in the future, toward a broader guaranteed income strategy. We ground our advocacy in collaboration, racial equity, and sustainable decision-making across coalitions of residents, allied groups, and stakeholders.

## **Conclusion**

We urge you to commit to exploring solutions to the pressing problem of long-standing economic and racial inequity divides in the District of Columbia by signing this petition. This approach is only part of the response. If you have any questions, or wish to become involved, please contact us at [dcubicoalition@gmail.com](mailto:dcubicoalition@gmail.com)