

## NO PEPSCO PLEDGE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS FOR CANDIDATES

### How do I sign on to the No Pepco pledge?

Please send an email to [nopepcopledge@gmail.com](mailto:nopepcopledge@gmail.com) that you would like to be listed as a signer of the pledge, and we'll get your name on our list and posted to our website!

### What are the requirements of the No Pepco pledge for my campaign?

The requirements of the No Pepco pledge for the duration of my campaign and if elected to DC Council are the following:

- I must reject all contributions from Pepco, Washington Gas, and other fossil fuel companies.
- I must voluntarily disclose all meeting times and topics with Pepco and Washington Gas representatives and lobbyists, and take detailed minutes of all such meetings to be made accessible to the public upon request.
- I must support legislation for an economic feasibility study on the implementation of alternative utility models such as Community Choice Aggregation, independent of Pepco and Washington Gas's influence.

### How does this differ from taking public financing through the new DC Fair Elections program?

We encourage candidates to take public financing and have supported the DC Fair Elections programming since campaigning began in the District for public financing. By taking public financing, candidates are already required to reject corporate and PAC donations so taking the Pepco Pledge only adds a few stipulations to your campaign work and fundraising. Your campaign must:

- Reject donations from Pepco and Washington Gas lobbyists
- Voluntarily disclose all meeting times and topics with Pepco and Washington Gas representatives and lobbyists, and take detailed minutes of all such meetings;
- Support legislation for a study, independent of Pepco and Washington Gas's influence, that explores alternative utility models such as Community Choice Aggregation.

### Where can I see who else signed the pledge?

Please follow [this link](#) to see a full list of all other candidates running for DC Council who have signed the pledge.

### Who else in the District supports this?

A wide coalition of community partners have signed on in support of the No Pepco Pledge. By joining the coalition, organizations and individuals from across the District are urging candidates running for election to sign their campaigns on. [Click here](#) for an updated list of community partners who have endorsed the No Pepco Pledge.

### Why should I support this pledge?

Supporting this pledge will allow the DC Council greater ability to implement equitable and just renewable energy policy that serves all DC residents by diminishing the power Pepco currently wields in the District's political space. With the passage of the Clean Energy DC Omnibus Act, Washington, DC has one of the strongest renewable energy targets in the United States. However, pepco has historically opposed renewable energy legislation and is a barrier to the District achieving its transition to 100% renewable energy. Moreover, it is important that the DC Council be free from the corporate influence of pepco in order to pass stronger legislation, grounded in equity, to realize a just transition to renewable energy that benefits all District residents.

Furthermore, signing on to the pledge creates space for a larger conversation around energy democracy goals by indicating support for an independent study to explore alternative models of utility ownership, such as community choice aggregation. This is important for DC to achieve its renewable energy goals with direct community input by providing a model where residents have more of a say over how their energy supply and distribution is handled. Lastly, as a candidate running for DC Council, it is of the utmost importance that Councilmembers represent their constituents' interests. As reflected by the wide array of organizations and individuals endorsing the No Pepco Pledge, there is strong, grassroots support for Councilmembers to reject Pepco's monetary and lobbying influence by signing the No Pepco Pledge.

### **Why target Pepco?**

As an investor-owned utility, Pepco runs off our taxpayer money but has spent the last decade fighting efforts to transition the District to renewable energy, increasing rates for DC residents counter to campaign promises, and influencing legislators through closed-door meetings and mergers. Please check out [our background page](#) on Pepco's misdeeds for a longer explanation, but for some fast facts:

- Pepco campaigned for its merger with Exelon with promises of freezing rates but reversed course after and has steadily increased District rates almost yearly, with more hikes slated for 2019.
- Immediately after their merger, Exelon suspended the trading of Pepco stock. This move resulted in a \$1.6 billion windfall for shareholders – a nice chunk of which went to Pepco executives – and allowed Exelon to claim that the deal was done.
- The Pepco-Exelon merger was approved through backroom deals, despite the fact that 27 ANCs, 26 Community Organizations, and 4 Councilmembers (Councilmembers Cheh, Grosso, Silverman, and Allen) were on the record as opposing the merger.

### **How does the No Pepco Pledge relate to other issues facing District residents?**

The No Pepco Pledge aims to reduce Pepco's control over DC's energy supply and to reduce its influence within DC politics. Reducing Pepco's influence connects with many other important issues throughout the district, such as equity, economic development, and climate justice. As a monopoly utility, Pepco has the ability to implement rate hikes without consultation with residents, which hits low-income residents in the District the hardest. This has implications for equity and upward economic mobility because lower-income residents have to spend a larger percentage of their income on energy bills as rates go up. In addition, District residents are concerned about climate change impacts - Pepco's opposition to renewable energy and its influence in DC politics directly inhibits the Council's ability to implement renewable energy action and to pass climate justice legislation. Moreover, front-line communities in wards 5, 7,

and 8 bear the brunt of climate change impacts, underscoring the relationship between inequity and environmental justice.

**What happens after the 2020 election to continue placing checks and balances on Pepco?**

350 DC and partners are running the No Pepco Pledge to shine a light on Pepco's corrupt influence on the District's politics and eventually introduce legislation to curb it. We want current and prospective Councilmembers to not only reject current financial and lobbying influence of the city's utilities by signing the Pledge, but also to introduce (or campaign on) energy democracy legislation. This could include community choice aggregation or municipalization of the electric utility to drive ratepayer costs down and to give the city the power to choose its own energy generation source on behalf of its residents. If your office wants to talk about introducing legislation or campaigning on a platform of energy democracy, please email our campaign at [nopepcoplead@ gmail.com](mailto:nopepcoplead@ gmail.com).