

**AFSCME DISTRICT COUNCIL 47**  
**2023 CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**(City Council District and City Council-At-Large)**

**CANDIDATE INFORMATION**

**Candidate Personal Contact Information (Fields marked with asterisks are required)**

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**Campaign Contact Information**

Full Name of Campaign Committee: \* Friends of Jeffery Young Jr, Esq  
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**Candidacy Information**

What office are you seeking? \* City Council

If you are running for a district seat, in which district are you running? \* 5<sup>th</sup> District

Are you the incumbent? \* Yes \_\_\_ No X      If yes, year first elected:

With which party are you registered? Democratic Party

Please list union leaders you seek input from when developing your legislative agenda:  
Currently, I have not sought input from union leaders formally, however, I have regular conversations with friends and family who are rank-and-file members of their respective unions.

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Who are your opponents?

There are 6 others seeking the Democratic nomination to represent the 5<sup>th</sup> Council District, however, I do not view them as my opponents. We are all seeking to serve our community and our City. They are Jon Hankins, Curtis Wilkerson, Aissia Richardson, Patrick Griffin, Isa Matin, and J.P Miranda.

If there is not sufficient space to respond to the following questions, please attach additional sheets to the questionnaire.

**CAMPAIGN**

1. Briefly describe your campaign's path to victory. What issues will you be emphasizing throughout your campaign and why?

Our pathway to victory will be to target voters in high & medium voting precincts in the 5th District using technology, targeted social media ads, door-to-door canvassing to speak with voters, and garnering support from Committee people directly in the 5th District. My campaign has already sent out 15,000 texts to voters in the district, informing them about who I am, and my solutions to; The reduction of gun violence, improving education outcomes, enhancing neighborhood quality of life, criminal justice reform, equitable development, increasing economic and entrepreneurial opportunities, and providing equity in health and environmental justice are my priorities.

**PHILADELPHIA ECONOMY**

2. Do you support raising the Living Wage requirement of employers that do business with the city from its current rate? What would your approach be to promoting a Living Wage requirement for employers not covered by the Living Wage Ordinance?

Philadelphia workers deserve to be able to live in the city they work. I support raising living wage requirements. I would encourage Philadelphia businesses to provide living wage benefits through tax incentives.

3. The City requires companies with 10 or more employees to provide paid sick leave. Many states and cities have similar laws with no exemptions. Would you support updating the legislation to put it in line with what other states and cities have passed?

Small businesses are the backbone of our economy. I will need to study the effects on our local economy before supporting such legislation.

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**PENSION/RETIREMENT SYSTEM**

4. What is your position on the current cap on annual contribution in the defined benefit plan by employees in the stacked hybrid plan of the Municipal Employee Pension system? Should the cap be indexed to include automatic increases tied to salary increases?

I support increases in the annual contribution for salary increases up to \$100k. however, Council should ensure the city's exposure to investment risk is minimal.

**EDUCATION/SCHOOL BOARD**

5. What qualities and experience would you look for in appointees to the School Board? What standards should School Board appointees use to evaluate current or proposed privatization

As a candidate running for the 5th Council district in Philadelphia, I believe that the most critical qualities that School Board appointees should possess are a strong commitment to public education, a deep understanding of the challenges facing our schools, and the ability to work collaboratively with other board members, educators, and community stakeholders. Regarding experience, I believe that appointees to the School Board should have a combination of experience in education, public service, and community advocacy. Experience in education will provide them with a better understanding of the needs of our students and educators, while public service and community advocacy experience will give them the tools to work effectively with other stakeholders in our city.

Regarding the standards that School Board appointees should use to evaluate current or proposed privatization measures such as charter schools, I believe that they should use a set of principles that prioritize the needs of our students and educators.

These principles should include ensuring that charter schools are held to the same standards of accountability and transparency as traditional public schools, protecting the rights of students and families to access high-quality public education, and working with our Philadelphia Delegation in Harrisburg.

Additionally, any proposal for privatization measures such as charter schools should be thoroughly evaluated through a transparent and participatory process that includes input from educators, families, and community stakeholders.

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6. How would you work to support acquiring fair State funding for the Philadelphia School District? What experience and relationships do you have working with entities in Harrisburg that would help accomplish that?

As someone who has worked on legislation regarding public school funding, I believe that ensuring fair and adequate state funding for the Philadelphia School District is crucial to the success of our students and our city.

To achieve this goal, I would work closely with other elected officials, advocacy groups, and community stakeholders to build a coalition of support for fair school funding in Harrisburg. I have experience working with these groups, and I understand the importance of building relationships and coalitions to achieve policy goals. In terms of my relationships with entities in Harrisburg, I have worked extensively with the Pennsylvania State Legislature on education funding issues during my time as Chief Counsel for the previous Councilperson. Through that work, I have built strong relationships with legislators on both sides of the aisle and understand the legislative process for securing funding. I would work closely with these legislators to advocate for fair funding for Philadelphia schools and to build support for legislation that would ensure that our schools receive the resources they need to provide our students with a high-quality education. This would involve working with the Philadelphia Delegation, and our current Speaker to stress allocating fair funding to Philadelphia schools and promoting policies that prioritize the needs of our students.

In addition, I would work to raise awareness about the importance of education funding among the broader public and to engage community stakeholders in advocating for fair funding for our schools. This would involve reaching out to local community organizations, town halls, business groups, and advocacy groups to build a broad-based coalition of support for our schools and to ensure that the voices of Philadelphia's residents are heard in Harrisburg. Overall, I believe that by building strong relationships, working collaboratively with other elected officials and community stakeholders, and advocating for fair funding policies, we can ensure that the Philadelphia School District has the resources it needs to provide a high-quality education to all of our students.

**CITY SERVICES**

7. What are your priorities for funding City and Court services? How would you ensure that these services are provided equitably throughout the city?

My top priorities for funding City and Court services would be to ensure that our police and fire departments have the resources they need to keep our communities safe, to provide adequate funding for our courts to ensure that justice is served fairly and efficiently, and to invest in critical services such as trash and recycling, road maintenance, and public transportation.

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To ensure that these services are provided equitably throughout the city, I would work to ensure that funding is allocated based on need, with a particular focus on communities that have historically been underfunded or neglected. This would involve working closely with community leaders and organizations to understand the needs of each community and to ensure that funding is allocated in a way that is responsive to those needs.

As a Councilperson, I would work to ensure that these investments are made in a way that is equitable and responsive to the needs of all residents.

8. What level of services should the city support to fully fund and fully staff our Library and Parks and Recreation systems? Please explain your position and how you believe those systems can be funded.

I believe that our Library and Parks and Recreation systems are essential to the well-being of our communities and that we should fully fund and fully staff these systems to ensure that all residents have access to high-quality services and programs.

In terms of funding these systems using the 2022 budget of the City of Philadelphia, I believe that we should prioritize these services by allocating a larger portion of the budget to them. The 2022 budget allocates \$66.7 million to the Free Library of Philadelphia and \$118.9 million to the Department of Parks and Recreation. While these are significant amounts of funding, I believe that we should increase these allocations in order to fully fund and staff these systems.

One potential source of funding for these systems could be through a reallocation of funds from other areas of the budget that may be less of a priority. For example, I believe that we could reduce funding for certain administrative departments and redirect those funds toward the Library and Parks and Recreation systems.

Another potential source of funding could be through public-private partnerships and grants. We could work with community organizations and private companies to secure additional funding for these systems and to support innovative programs and initiatives. Overall, I believe that fully funding and fully staffing our Library and Parks and Recreation systems should be a top priority for the City of Philadelphia. By allocating more funding to these systems and exploring innovative funding sources, we can ensure that all residents have access to the resources and programs they need to thrive.

9. How would you address staffing shortages throughout departments, including those that are a result of unfilled positions? What initiatives would you put in place to help hire and retain current City / Court workers?

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I believe that addressing staffing shortages throughout departments is critical to providing high-quality services to our residents. In order to help hire and retain current City / Court workers, I would put in place several initiatives.

Firstly, I would work to increase the salaries and benefits of City / Court workers to make these positions more attractive and competitive. I believe that fair compensation is essential to attracting and retaining talented individuals in these roles.

Secondly, I would work with the City of Philadelphia and the State to secure funding for training programs for individuals in the 5th District that make less than \$25,000 a year. These programs would be designed to provide the necessary skills and qualifications to fill vacant positions in City / Court departments.

The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) training funding from the State can be a valuable resource to support these training programs. By working with local organizations and community colleges, we can develop targeted training programs that address the specific needs of City / Court departments and provide individuals in the 5th District with the skills and qualifications necessary to fill these positions.

By investing in training programs and providing these individuals with access to the resources they need to succeed, we can help to fill vacant positions and address staffing shortages throughout City / Court departments. By creating a supportive and positive work environment, we can attract and retain talented individuals who are committed to serving our communities. Overall, I believe that addressing staffing shortages throughout departments and providing training and career development opportunities for City / Court workers is essential to delivering high-quality services to our residents. By investing in our workforce and providing them with the support they need to succeed, we can build a stronger and more resilient City of Philadelphia.

10. What is your position on the privatization of City services?

I strongly believe in the value of union city services workers and the critical role they play in delivering high-quality services to our communities. Therefore, my position on the privatization of City services is that I do not support it. Privatization of City services often leads to the erosion of wages, benefits, and job security for workers, as private companies seek to maximize profits at the expense of workers. This can have a negative impact on the quality of services provided to our communities and can lead to a decline in the overall well-being of our city.

Instead, I believe that we should invest in our City services workforce, provide fair wages and benefits, and create a supportive and positive work environment that encourages career growth and development. By valuing and supporting our City services workers, we can attract and retain talented individuals who are committed to serving our communities and delivering high-quality services.

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**ENVIRONMENT**

11. What steps do you want the city to take to address climate change and to shift away from fossil fuels toward renewable energy sources? Do you support the City amending its investment portfolio to divest from fossil fuel companies?

I believe that climate change is one of the most pressing issues of our time. Recent environmental studies have shown that climate change has already impacted the City of Philadelphia. These impacts include more frequent and severe heat waves, increased flooding, and decreased air quality. These impacts disproportionately affect low-income communities and communities of color.

The City of Philadelphia must take bold and proactive steps to address this issue and shift away from fossil fuels toward renewable energy sources.

To achieve this goal, I propose the following steps:

1. Increase the City's investment in renewable energy sources: The City of Philadelphia should increase its investment in renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, and geothermal. This investment will not only reduce our reliance on fossil fuels but also create new job opportunities for our residents.
2. Encourage green building and energy-efficient retrofits: The City should encourage the development of green buildings and energy-efficient retrofits through incentives such as tax breaks and grants. This will help reduce the City's carbon footprint and save residents money on their energy bills.
3. Develop a comprehensive plan for climate action: The City should develop a comprehensive plan for climate action that outlines specific goals and targets for reducing our carbon footprint. This plan should involve input from a diverse group of stakeholders, including environmental advocates, business leaders, and community members. I will fight for the City to invest in renewable energy companies that will help us achieve our climate goals while also providing a good return on investment.

**TAXES**

12. What measures would you support to make sure that wealthy non-profits pay their fair share to support City and Court services?

I believe that implementing a PILOT program and requiring non-profit organizations to pay fees for certain services are effective measures to ensure that wealthy non-profits pay their fair share. I would support requiring non-profit organizations to pay fees for certain services that

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they use, such as waste disposal or police services. This would ensure that they contribute to the cost of providing these services and alleviate the burden on taxpayers. These measures have been successfully implemented in other cities including Boston and New York, and has generated millions of dollars in revenue for those cities.

13. Would you support any changes to the city's property tax abatement program? If not, please explain why. If so, please explain how?

**Yes**

14. How would you reform city taxes to increase revenue? What is your position on the Net Income and Gross Receipts Tax and on the Wealth Tax legislation? If you have other ideas to increase revenue, please explain them.

I believe that it is necessary to reform city taxes to increase revenue. However, it is also essential to ensure that these reforms are equitable and do not place an undue burden on any one group. Regarding the Net Income and Gross Receipts Tax, I believe that they can be reformed to increase revenue while reducing the burden on small businesses. I support reviewing the current tax rates and exemptions to make sure they are fair and reasonable. Additionally, we should explore options for incentivizing businesses to locate and invest in underserved areas of the city. I believe that we can increase revenue by investing in our city's infrastructure and economy, which will create jobs and stimulate growth. I support the creation of a Municipal Bank that could provide low-interest loans to small businesses and individuals, which would help to stimulate the local economy. Overall, I believe that we need to take a comprehensive approach to tax reform and revenue generation. By working together, we can find solutions that are equitable and beneficial for all Philadelphians.

**PHILADELPHIA HOUSING**

15. Do you support increasing revenue for the Housing Trust Fund to help residents avoid displacement in communities currently facing development pressure?

**Yes**

16. As a city elected official, what steps will you take to ensure local government plays a proactive role in expanding permanent affordable and workforce housing in Philadelphia?

I believe that affordable housing is a critical issue that must be addressed. I am committed to working towards expanding permanent affordable and workforce housing in the City of



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Philadelphia. I believe legislation can be done in a way that balances the needs of developers with the needs of residents for affordable and workforce housing.

Additionally, I will work to allocate more funding towards affordable housing programs and increase the number of affordable housing units in the city. I will also work with community groups and housing advocates to ensure that the voices of residents are heard and that their needs are taken into account in the development of affordable housing policies.

Furthermore, I believe in expanding the use of existing programs such as the Philadelphia Housing Trust Fund and the Philadelphia Land Bank, and making it easier for residents to access affordable housing.

In terms of workforce housing, I support creating programs that provide subsidies or incentives for workers in certain industries, such as healthcare or education, to live in the city. This will help ensure that essential workers can afford to live in the communities they serve. By developing legislation, allocating more funding, and working with community groups and housing advocates, we can ensure that all residents have access to safe and affordable housing.

17. Do you support extending good cause eviction protections to all residential leases? Do you support rent control measures to protect Philadelphia tenants?

I support the City's current Eviction program that protects renters and landlords, that brings in a mediator to find equitable solutions. I support implementing similar measures like the Section 8 program, to support renters.

**PHILADELPHIA RESTORATIVE JUSTICE**

18. Do you support revising the Memo of Understanding between the Philadelphia Police Department and Philadelphia School District to close the school to prison pipeline? If yes, explain how you would accomplish this. If no, please explain why?

Yes, I believe that we must take action to close the school-to-prison pipeline and ensure that all students have access to a safe and supportive learning environment.

One critical step in accomplishing this goal is revising the Memo of Understanding between the Philadelphia Police Department and the Philadelphia School District. This memorandum outlines the role of police officers in schools and has been criticized for contributing to the criminalization of student behavior. I support revising this memorandum to reduce the presence of police officers in schools and ensure that their involvement is limited to situations that require

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law enforcement intervention. This can be accomplished by implementing programs that disrupt the school-to-prison pipeline and promote restorative justice practices.

I believe using the current model that disrupts the school-to-prison pipeline is the restorative justice program. Restorative justice programs focus on repairing the harm caused by an offense, rather than punishing the offender. This approach involves bringing together all parties affected by an incident and working together to find a solution that addresses the harm caused and repairs relationships. Implementing restorative justice programs in schools can help reduce the number of suspensions and expulsions and create a more supportive learning environment for all students. By reducing the number of students who are pushed out of school and into the criminal justice system, we can break the school-to-prison pipeline and create a more equitable education system.

19. Do you support additional funding for programs that are alternatives to incarceration for drug addiction, mental health treatment, and other issues? If yes, how would you measure the effectiveness of those programs? If no, please explain.

I support additional funding for programs that offer alternatives to incarceration for drug addiction and mental health treatment. The current approach to these issues has not been effective, and we need to explore innovative and evidence-based solutions. One alternative to incarceration for drug addiction and mental health treatment is the use of diversion programs. These programs aim to identify individuals who would benefit from treatment rather than incarceration and provide them with the necessary resources and support to address their underlying issues. Another alternative is the use of community-based programs that provide individuals with access to comprehensive and culturally appropriate services, including mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, housing, and employment services. The effectiveness of these programs can be measured through various metrics, including reduced rates of recidivism, improved mental health outcomes, and increased rates of employment and stable housing. Additionally, community feedback and engagement can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of these programs and help inform future improvements.

20. What community policing initiatives do you support or propose? Please explain.

I strongly support community policing initiatives. One community policing initiative that I support is the use of community-based policing models, which involve assigning officers to specific geographic areas where they can develop relationships with community members and address local concerns. This approach has been shown to improve police-community relations, increase trust, and improve crime prevention outcomes. Another initiative that I support is the use of problem-oriented policing, which involves identifying and addressing specific issues that contribute to crime in a community. This approach involves

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collaboration between law enforcement, the Health Department, and community members to develop strategies that address the root causes of crime.

21. What funding and staffing proposals would you support to enhance probation and parole services for Philadelphians under supervised release?

I believe that enhancing probation and parole services is crucial to ensuring public safety and reducing recidivism rates in our city. To achieve this, I would support proposals that increase funding and staffing for probation and parole services. There are currently over 45,000 individuals under probation or parole supervision in our city. However, the Probation and Parole Department has been understaffed and underfunded for years, leading to caseloads that are far too high for probation and parole officers to manage effectively. This has resulted in a high rate of probation and parole violations, which can lead to increased incarceration rates and further strain on our criminal justice system.

To address these issues, I would support proposals to increase funding for probation and parole services in the City of Philadelphia, including hiring additional probation and parole officers to reduce caseloads and increase supervision of individuals under supervised release. I would support proposals to provide additional training and resources to probation and parole officers to better address the needs of individuals under their supervision, such as mental health and substance abuse treatment. Furthermore, I believe it is important to invest in community-based alternatives to incarceration for individuals under supervised release, such as community service and job training programs, which have been shown to be effective in reducing recidivism rates. By providing individuals with the support and resources they need to succeed, we can help them avoid further involvement in the criminal justice system and build stronger and safer communities.

22. What funding and staffing proposals would you support for the Department of Prisons to ensure incarcerated citizens are best prepared for return to the community from incarceration or from alternative detention programs?

I believe that it is crucial to prioritize funding and staffing proposals for the Department of Prisons to ensure that incarcerated citizens are best prepared for their return to the community. This includes providing access to education, job training, and mental health and addiction services. To accomplish this, I would propose increasing the budget for the Department of Prisons, specifically allocating funds toward education and job training programs for incarcerated individuals. These programs have been shown to reduce recidivism rates and improve outcomes for those returning to their communities after release.

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Additionally, I would support hiring additional staff to ensure that these programs are implemented effectively and that incarcerated individuals have access to the support they need. There are currently over 4,700 individuals incarcerated in the city's jails. The Department of Prisons has stated that they are committed to providing access to education, job training, and mental health services to all incarcerated individuals. However, their ability to provide these services is limited by staffing shortages and budget constraints. By increasing funding and staffing levels for the Department of Prisons, we can better prepare incarcerated individuals for their return to the community, which ultimately benefits everyone. By reducing recidivism rates, we can decrease the number of individuals who are incarcerated and increase public safety. Additionally, providing education and job training opportunities can help break the cycle of poverty and reduce the likelihood of individuals returning to the criminal justice system. I am committed to working with community members, advocates, and other stakeholders to find effective solutions for the challenges faced by the Department of Prisons and to ensure that those returning to our communities from incarceration have the best possible chance for success.

23. What steps do you believe the City can take to reduce the availability of guns in Philadelphia?

I believe that reducing gun violence is a top priority for our community. There are a number of steps the City can take to reduce the availability of guns in Philadelphia, including

1. Strengthening gun laws: We must work to strengthen our current gun laws and pass new laws that close loopholes and make it harder for guns to fall into the wrong hands. This can include expanding background checks, regulating the sale of ammunition, and restricting the sale of high-capacity magazines.
2. Investing in violence prevention programs: We must invest in violence prevention programs that work to address the root causes of gun violence, such as poverty, trauma, and lack of opportunity. These programs can include job training, mental health services, and community outreach.
3. Supporting law enforcement efforts: We must work with law enforcement to identify and disrupt illegal gun trafficking, as well as to seize illegal firearms and hold those who use them accountable.
4. Educating the public: We must educate the public about the dangers of gun violence and promote safe gun storage practices.

24. Do you have any plans regarding programs that support and protect victims of crime and other affected members of the community?

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I believe that supporting and protecting victims of crime is a critical component of a safe and just community. I support increasing funding and resources for programs that provide services to victims of crime, including counseling, advocacy, and legal assistance.

One program that I believe is effective in supporting victims of crime is the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office Victim/Witness Services Unit. This program provides a range of services to victims of crime, including crisis intervention, court accompaniment, and assistance with restitution and victim compensation.

Additionally, I support the Philadelphia Police Department's Special Victims Unit, which is dedicated to investigating and prosecuting cases of sexual assault and domestic violence. It is important that we continue to support and fund programs like the Special Victims Unit that are working to address these crimes and provide support to victims.

I also believe that it is important to support community-based organizations that provide services and support to victims of crime. Organizations such as Women Against Abuse, the Philadelphia Center for Gun Violence Reporting, and the Philadelphia Anti-Drug/Anti-Violence Network (PAAN) are doing important work to support victims and prevent violence in our communities. I will work to ensure that these organizations have the funding and resources they need to continue their important work.

**PHILADELPHIA CORPORATE POWER**

25. Do you support publicly financed campaigns for all City elected offices? If no, please explain.

Overall, I believe that publicly financed campaigns have the potential to improve the fairness and transparency of our elections. However, I also understand that there are concerns about the cost and limitations of such a system. As a candidate for the 5th Council district in the City of Philadelphia, I am committed to exploring all options to ensure that our elections are fair and transparent.

26. Do you support legislation that enables the City to recover subsidies from corporations or other businesses that fail to provide jobs or other benefits to city residents as a condition of the subsidies? Please explain.

I support legislation that enables the City to recover subsidies from corporations or other businesses that fail to provide jobs or other benefits to city residents as a condition of the subsidies. This type of legislation ensures that corporations and businesses are held accountable for the promises they make to the City and its residents. However, there are potential negatives that may deter some businesses to be hesitant to accept subsidies that come with job and benefit requirements, which could deter them from investing in the City, and the complexity to implement enforcement. I am committed to working with my constituents and stakeholders to find a solution.

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**RESIDENCY ISSUE**

27. What is your position on City and Court employees having the option to live outside the city?  
Please explain.

**I do not have a position at this time.**

28. Are there any other issues you'd like to mention about which we have not asked you in this questionnaire?

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