

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)

Name: * Katherine Gilmore Richardson
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Campaign Contact Information

Full Name of Campaign Committee: * Vote Kathy for Philly
HQ Address: * P.O. Box 28029, Philadelphia, PA 19131
Campaign Manager Name: * Alexandra K.
Campaign Manager Phone: * 267-228-3064
Campaign Manager E-Mail: * info@katherineforphilly.com

Candidacy Information

What office are you seeking? * City Council At-Large

If you are running for a district seat, in which district are you running? *

Are you the incumbent? * Yes No If yes, year first elected: 2019

With which party are you registered? Democratic

Please list union leaders you seek input from when developing your legislative agenda:
I worked with Cathy Scott on a very important piece of legislation to help CTE students with a point preference when applying for city employment and I look forward to working with the new leadership team on future legislative matters. I also reach out to and seek input from Ernest Garrett, Ryan Boyer, Wayne Miller, Jerry Jordan, Carol Stukes-Baylor (any and everything related to Pensions, Mr. Pat Eiding and AFL-CIO and all union officials across the City. I send

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out a labor update after each session of Council for all labor officials who wish to receive the updates.

Who are your opponents?

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?

Run a 21st century, post Act 77 campaign that reaches every voter. I will emphasis issues that impact our kids, our neighborhoods and our City including public safety, education and workforce development, environmental justice and climate change and transparency and accountability in Government. The three things I would like to accomplish is improve public safety and quality of life in every Philadelphia neighborhood, ensure every child graduates from college or career ready and address climate change and environmental justice through a whole of government approach.

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?

I strongly support a robust partnership between the city, labor unions, worker advocates, and the business community to ensure every Philadelphian earns a living wage and has robust career opportunities

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?

I strongly support a robust partnership between the city, labor unions, worker advocates, and the business community to ensure every Philadelphian has a workplace that offers them robust benefits, including paid sick time and I voted in favor of the last sick leave bill.

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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?

We should always be working diligently to ensure that our workers are able to save as much for retirement as they are able. I am open to working with all partners to ensure that we are providing robust resources, information, and programs to enhance the retirement benefits we offer our workers. Additionally, I have worked closely with the Pension Board to ensure we are making smart investment decisions that will benefit our retirees now and in the future. This includes passing a resolution to prioritize environmental, social, and governance standards in our investing and to include climate risk disclosures.

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 measures (e.g., charter schools)?

As a Philadelphia public school graduate via Gompers, Masterman and the Philadelphia High School for Girls, former teacher, and current parent of three public school students at two different schools, I know every child in Philadelphia deserves to have the best education possible, and I am committed to collaborating with my colleagues, the Administration, District leadership, and the School Board to ensure our Philadelphia Public School system is supported. In addition, I have been very vocal and have been working with the district to change their internal policies about how families are directed to schools. I also believe deeper community participation is needed and necessary when decisions are made regarding appointments to the School Board.

- 7. 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?

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Every child in Philadelphia deserves to have the best education possible, and I am committed to collaborating with anyone who is willing to help us make that happen. I have very good, long standing working relationships with many State Representatives and Senators, including those in leadership positions.

CITY SERVICES

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

Appropriating funds is one of the most important jobs we have as members of City Council. I am committed to ensuring we have robust funding to address the needs and quality of life issues of our residents and provide the highest quality service, and I am open to conversations about the best ways to do so.

- 9. 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.

Appropriating funds is one of the most important jobs we have as members of City Council. I am committed to ensuring we have robust funding to address the needs and quality of life issues of our residents and provide the highest quality service. In the last budget cycle, I helped secure an additional \$675,000 for the Free Library and an additional \$2.1 million for Parks and Recreation and an additional \$1,000,000 for the Dell Music Center. I also passed legislation creating the City's first Tree Fund, which will collect fees from developers to provide dedicated funding to Parks and Recreation to expand and maintain our tree canopy.

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10. 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?

My main priority in council is connecting Philadelphians to family sustaining and supporting careers and working for the City of Philadelphia should be a first choice career option. My first bill in Council was to create a pipeline to public service for graduates of the School District's Career and Technical Education programs. This bill passed with strong support from DC 47 and DC 33 leadership in June 2022 and was supported by a majority of Philadelphia voters in November 2022. I have also worked closely with the Office of Human Resources to propose changes to job specs to make positions more aligned with career and technical education experiences. I am deeply committed to ensuring we have a robust workforce that is well-supported and has upward mobility for long-term learning and career opportunities.

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

We should not privatize city services. I strongly support our city workers.

Commented [MA1]: Add to all questions that reference City workers

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ENVIRONMENT

- 12. 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?

As Chair of the Committee on the Environment and a member of the U.S. EPA’s Local Government Advisory Committee, I am deeply committed to addressing climate change and environmental justice, and I am hyper focused on ensuring we take a whole government approach to addressing these challenges. Additionally, I have secured an additional \$2 million in the City’s budget over the last two fiscal years to ensure we are increasing funding for the Office of Sustainability and the Philadelphia Energy Authority. I have also helped secure millions of dollars in federal funding to address lead in water in public schools and to monitor and mitigate air pollution in environmental justice communities. I also worked closely with the Pension Board to pass a resolution in early 2022 to prioritize environmental, social, and governance standards in our investing and to include climate risk disclosures as part of our investment decision making.

TAXES

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

Creating smart tax policy and appropriating funds are some of the most important jobs we have as members of City Council. I am committed to ensuring we have robust funding to address the needs and quality of life issues of our residents and provide the highest quality service, and I am open to conversations about the best ways to do so.

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

I supported Council President's Neighborhood Preservation Initiative, and I am open to conversations to discuss how we can continue working toward create a development environment that promotes affordable, sustainable housing while ensuring we have sufficient revenue for the city and school district.

- 15. 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.

Appropriating funds is one of the most important jobs we have as members of City Council. I am committed to ensuring we have robust funding to address the needs and quality of life issues of our residents and provide the highest quality service, and I am open to conversations about the best ways to do so.

PHILADELPHIA HOUSING

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

I co-sponsored and voted for Councilmember Green's bill to create an annual appropriation for the Housing Trust Fund.

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17. 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?

As a lifelong Philadelphian, who was born and raised in Philadelphia, I am committed to ensuring Philadelphia remains affordable for all Philadelphians, including engaging in conversations about how to best maintain and expand our naturally occurring affordable housing stock while providing additional affordable housing options. In addition, I also think its important to focus on the expansion of homeownership options as well as programs to help keep Philadelphians in their homes and/or save their homes. Homeownership is one of the fastest ways to create generational wealth. Over the last 20-30 years, homeownership rates amongst black and brown residents in Philadelphia have decreased instead of increasing. We must work on creating generational wealth for all families. I strongly support Council President Clarke's Turn the Key program, which creates workforce housing for city employees, and I would be interested in conversations to support other innovative programs to expand access to affordable worker housing. In addition, I have worked very hard in Council to ensure we are providing additional support for the more than 10,000 residents facing tangled titles/deeds. I worked to ensure we invested \$7.6 million to help additional families, passed legislation to ensure families receive an information sheet on estate administration when a loved one passes away, as well as worked with Revenue to modify the regulations for the LOOP program for those that can prove equitable ownership. All in an effort to assist Philadelphians from being displaced.

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

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PHILADELPHIA RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

- 19. 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?

As a Philadelphia public school graduate via Gompers, Masterman and the Philadelphia High School for Girls, former teacher, and current parent of three public school students at two different schools, I know every child in Philadelphia deserves to have the best education possible, and I am committed to collaborating with my colleagues, the Administration, District leadership, and the School Board to ensure our Philadelphia Public School system is supported and that children feel safe and respected in school. I have advocated strongly for conflict resolution for all students, and following a hearing I held in November 2021, the District created a program that provides Tier 1 conflict resolution to all students. Additionally as a staffer I worked on the resolution to stop suspensions for young people in lower grades.

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- 20. 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.

Providing robust behavioral health programs is crucial to supporting Philadelphians who are struggling with substance use disorder and mental health issues. I strongly support robust funding for these programs to help get more Philadelphians into treatment programs and into supportive, stable environments.

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

As a lifelong Philadelphian, I have seen how policing in our communities has changed over the last decades. I strongly support creating a system of policing that is connected to community organizations, faith-based organizations, and prioritizes creating safe neighborhoods through strong local community bonds. I have worked to help promote this vision through the Community Evening Resource Centers, which are a partnership between DHS, the Police Department, and community organizations. When I was growing up, we had strong community bonds that helped keep young people safe and out of trouble, and I am committed to working collaboratively to help address public safety through strong community partnerships.

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

We must ensure that every department in our city is well resourced and properly staffed. It is of vital importance to me that our workers feel safe and supported and that we provide the highest level of customer service to our residents. Ensuring we have robust and well-supported diversionary and post-release programs is crucial to the success of our efforts to improve public safety.

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23. 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?

My main priority in council is connecting Philadelphians to family sustaining and supporting careers, and I work diligently to ensure we are reducing barriers to employment and connecting our justice-involved residents to good career opportunities, housing and other support services to ensure they are successful upon release.

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

Addressing the flow of guns into our city is crucial. I have worked diligently to help the Administration have the legal tools it needs to crack down on nuisance businesses, which plague our communities and contribute to the illegal sale of guns, drugs, and other illegal activities. I strongly support intergovernmental collaboration to make sure we are working with our state and federal partners to stop the flow of illegal guns. I also worked with my colleagues to lead the effort to invest a historic \$150 million to address gun violence in the FY22 budget process.

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

I am a strong advocate for investing in our communities and residents that are most in need of support, and that includes victims of crime. I worked with my colleagues to lead the effort to invest a historic \$150 million to address gun violence in the FY22 budget process. I have also called out the Administration for failing to quickly spend resources Council has made available for family relocation. I have secured millions of dollars to create Community Evening Resource Centers, which are community-based safe spaces for young people that operate daily from 7 pm to 2 am. These centers have programming for young people, support for parents, and create service linkages for those in need. There are four centers currently operating and an RFP open for two more, which will equal six centers or one in each police division. Finally, I co-sponsored and strongly supported Councilmember Johnson in his legislation to create an Office of Victim Advocate and to provide funding for that office.

PHILADELPHIA CORPORATE POWER

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

I am a strong supporter of free and fair elections, and I am open to conversations about how we can best achieve that goal. I also supported an increased in funding for our City Commissioners office in the last budget cycle.

20. 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.

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My main priority in council is connecting Philadelphians to family sustaining and supporting careers, and I work diligently to ensure we are prioritizing job opportunities for Philadelphians in all of our economic development decisions.

RESIDENCY ISSUE

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

I am a strong believer that it is crucial that we are prioritizing career opportunities for our City's young people and city residents and this is especially true when it comes to the City itself acting as a model employer.

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

Katherine Gilmore Richardson is serving her first term as Councilmember At-Large for the City of Philadelphia. Gilmore Richardson is the youngest woman ever elected citywide and the youngest African American woman ever elected to Philadelphia City Council. She is focused on addressing the city's ongoing recovery from Covid-19, upskilling and reskilling our workforce, supporting local, small, and minority-owned businesses, and addressing climate change and environmental justice.

Councilmember Gilmore Richardson has passed legislation that bolsters transparency and accountability in city government, requires businesses to provide information about workforce development training when they separate an employee, cracks down on nuisance businesses, and

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integrates climate risk disclosure and sustainable investment decisions into the City's Pension Fund operations.

Councilmember Gilmore Richardson also created Philadelphia's first Apprenticeship Guidebook. The Guidebook includes information about application requirements, training programs, career fields, and pay and benefits for over 20 apprenticeship programs in Philadelphia.

Councilmember Gilmore Richardson is also focused on improving Philadelphia's public schools. As a result of her work, the School District is now providing Tier I conflict resolution, which includes daily programming, to every student in the District. She has also advocated for improving Career and Technical Education curricula to better align with the jobs of the future and create more direct pipelines to family sustaining and supporting jobs.

As the Chair of the Committee on the Environment, Councilmember Gilmore Richardson passed legislation updating the landscaping requirements in the zoning code and creating a Philadelphia Tree Fund, which collects fees from developers to expand and maintain our city's tree canopy. She has also secured millions of dollars to expand funding for Environmental Justice through the budget process, including creating a new Climate Resilience Grant Program. In 2021, Councilmember Gilmore Richardson was appointed to the United States Environmental Protection Agency's Local Government Advisory Committee (LGAC). She is also the Vice Chair of the LGAC's Environmental Justice Working Group. She is the only representative on the LGAC from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Through this role, she has helped secure funding to address lead in school water facilities and air pollution in environmental justice communities.

Gilmore Richardson previously served as a staff member for Councilwoman Blondell Reynolds Brown for 11 years in roles ranging from Constituent Services to Chief of Staff. A lifelong Philadelphian, Gilmore Richardson is a graduate of the Philadelphia High School for Girls and West Chester University. She is a member of Ridge Avenue Church of God of Prophecy and a proud life member of Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Incorporated. Gilmore Richardson resides in Wynnefield with her husband and three children.

Articles:

<https://www.inquirer.com/politics/election/philadelphia-council-2023-at-large-race-who-is-running-20221216.html>

[Bill to increase Philadelphia's tree canopy would impose fees on developers who cut down trees without replacing them | PhillyVoice](#)

[COUNCILMEMBER GILMORE RICHARDSON PASSES THREE BILLS IN CITY COUNCIL, ADDRESSING CAREERS PIPELINES, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, AND PUBLIC SAFETY - Philadelphia City Council \(phlcouncil.com\)](#)

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[Opinion: Infrastructure funds should be for green projects - WHYY](#)

[CITY COUNCIL, PARTNERS ANNOUNCE \\$7.6 MILLION INVESTMENT TO HELP HOMEOWNERS CLEAR THEIR TANGLED TITLES - Philadelphia City Council \(phlcouncil.com\)](#)

[CITY OF PHILADELPHIA RECEIVES OVER \\$6 MILLION IN UNCLAIMED PROPERTY FUNDS FOLLOWING PASSAGE OF COUNCILMEMBER GILMORE RICHARDSON’S REPORTING LEGISLATION - Philadelphia City Council \(phlcouncil.com\)](#)

[City Council member Kathy Gilmore Richardson's new initiative aims to crack down on nuisance properties in Philadelphia - 6abc Philadelphia](#)

[A Philly Council member nearly lost her family home. Now she has a bill to help others avoid that plight | Local News | phillytrib.com](#)

[Support Local Black- and Brown-Owned Businesses this Holiday Season with Visit Philadelphia® — Visit Philadelphia Media Center \(visitphilly.com\)](#)

[Philadelphia City Council questions district’s projection for lower enrollment - Chalkbeat Philadelphia](#)

[Shapiro, Philly officials blast Mastriano for Confederate uniform faculty photo - City & State Pennsylvania \(cityandstatepa.com\)](#)

[Philadelphia curfew: Minors must be home by 10 p.m. under new council bill \(inquirer.com\)](#)

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