

**Greater Kansas City AFL-CIO
CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE**

Candidate Name: _____

Home Address: _____ **K.C., MO Zip** _____

Home Phone _____ **Cell Phone:** _____

E-Mail _____

Past or Present Union Membership: _____

Current Employer: _____ **Position:** _____

CAMPAIGN INFORMATION:

Political Office Sought: _____

Party _____

Campaign Director: _____

Campaign Treasurer: _____

Campaign Address: _____

Committee Name: _____

Previous Political Offices Held

Greater Kansas City AFL-CIO
KANSAS CITY CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

Some of the questions may appear not applicable to the office you seek. Please answer them anyway since we often call on other elected officials to publicly state their position on County, State, and Federal issues.

1) If taxpayer dollars are spent by our government, it makes sense that those dollars should be spent on products and services provided by U.S. citizens and companies. Would you support “Buy America” Legislation?

2) Will you use union print shops when having your campaign literature printed?

3) What car or cars do you own or drive?

4) Who provides your cell phone service?

5) What is your position on using public money to fund private or parochial schools?

6) Would you oppose any attempts to dissolve or dismantle an unaccredited school district that would leave every employee without a job?

7) What is your position on teacher tenure?

8) Would you support The KCATA operating, maintaining and servicing the City of Kansas City Streetcar for public transit operations?

9) Are you in favor of the State increasing it's funding for mass transit in Missouri for public transit systems. If so, How much?

10) Would you support the State investing in supplemental grants for equipment that would increase the use of clean energy for public mass transit systems?

11) An attempt to eliminate Kansas City's Earnings Tax by Rex Sinquefield has resulted in the need for voters to approve the tax every 5 years. Do you support continuation of the Earnings Tax?

Would you support state legislation that eliminates the need to vote every 5 years?

12) Kansas City's ATA is funded by 2 dedicated taxes. A 1/2 cent sales tax initiated in 1971 and a 3/8 cent sales tax approved by the voters in 2004. The public transportation tax is expected to raise \$29.6 million in the current fiscal year. The city plans to withhold \$5.4 million from the dedicated tax which will severely hamper operations and cut service.

Would you support using all of the dedicated tax to fund the KCATA?

13) Under the federal labor laws that apply to private sector employers, workers have the right to bargain collectively regarding wages, hours, and working conditions. Federal labor law even imposes a duty on private sector employers to bargain with unions in good faith and once an agreement is reached, that agreement is binding on the parties.

Would you support Collective Bargaining for all employees?

14) Would you support final and binding arbitration to settle disputes arising from collective bargaining agreements and negotiations?

15) There are some who maintain that the best way to “save taxpayers money” is to privatize more public services, to contract them out to private for-profit (usually non-union) businesses. There are serious questions about selling our state and local governments in this way, including some significant hidden costs to taxpayers. These include: needed government oversight of private firms, the lack of accountability to the public, poor quality work that may need to be redone at added cost, fees charged by private businesses that are not now charged by government for the same services, these are just a few examples. The privacy rights of individuals could be threatened since extensive personal information would be in the hands of private firms.

Will you oppose the privatization of public service?

16) A living wage ordinance requires employers to pay wages that are above federal or state minimum wage levels. Only a specific set of workers are covered by living wage ordinances, usually those employed by businesses that have a contract with a city or county government or those who receive economic development subsidies from the locality. The rationale behind the ordinances is that city and county governments should not contract with or subsidize employers who pay poverty-level wages. The living wages are set by a variety of means, most commonly as a percentage of the poverty line, for example 130% of the poverty level for a family of four.

Would you support Living Wage Legislation?

17) The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) was created in 1935 to govern private sector labor-management relations related to union organizing and collective bargaining. A vital part of the Act included the right of a union to negotiate a union security clause with an employer. A union security clause requires all workers who are covered by a collective bargaining agreement to share in the costs of union representation. A union must represent everyone in a bargaining unit and all receive the negotiated benefits, so Congress found it fair that everyone should contribute financially to the organization.

However, some employers continue to oppose any form of union security, and in 1947 a more conservative Congress amended the NLRA to allow states to pass laws prohibiting union security agreements. The National Association of Manufacturers, which had aggressively lobbied for the anti-union provision, began to promote these state-level laws under the deceptive slogan of “right-to-work”.

“Right-to-work” laws don’t create a single job or grant entitlement to employment. They do severely weaken unions by denying them the financial resources needed to be more effective. It doesn’t take long for a “right-to-work” law to translate into lower wages and benefits, a diminished standard of living, and weaker labor rights

and protection for workers. All of this has been documented in states with such laws. The right to negotiate a union security clause is vital to the existence of an effective union. A “right-to-work” law in Missouri would mean that it is the policy of the state to suppress unions.

Will you work against so-called “right-to-work” legislation in Missouri?

18) In an effort to elect officials with beliefs similar to ours, organized labor has been active in politics including endorsements and support for candidates. Recently there have been numerous attempts to single out and restrict Unions from political activity while allowing all other organizations to continue to actively participate in the election process. Legislation has been proposed that would;

- a) Restrict the use Union Dues for political activities**
- b) Limit or remove the rights of public employees to participate**
- c) Increase reporting requirements for Organized Labor**
- d) Damage the union’s ability to collect dues**
- e) Damage the union’s ability to collect voluntary political contributions**

Would you oppose such measures?

19) Many employers use a pay system designed to be a type of “rewards and punishments”. Sometimes called Pay for Performance, this system has objectives a worker must meet to receive a raise or avoid a pay cut. Although occasionally agreed to by Unions in some contracts, employers have abused these systems in the past. The objectives are very vague and subjective (such as “appearance” or “attitude”) and are not applied fairly and equally. In the past Pay for Performance has been used to discriminate against older workers, women and minorities.

Would you oppose Pay for Performance unless agreed to in a collective bargaining agreement?

20) In the construction industry, contractors who are awarded publicly funded construction projects are covered by our state prevailing wage law. They are required to pay workers employed on such projects wages that are representative of the wages paid to workers on similar private construction projects in the area (i.e. “prevailing”). The prevailing wage for each county is determined by the state based on employer surveys.

Since Missouri’s prevailing wage has been in effect, the law has been the silent partner of the public, serving to prevent unscrupulous contractors from winning contracts by undercutting local wage rates, hiring less-skilled labor and leaving the public with shoddy construction. The prevailing wage law ensures that contractors compete on the basis of quality and efficiency.

Do you support maintaining prevailing wage law protection for construction worker?

21) Responsible bidding is the idea that public construction projects paid for by taxpayer money such as schools, libraries, fire stations, roads and water treatment plants not always automatically be awarded the lowest bidder. The public body undertaking the project should retain some discretion to award the project to the lowest "responsible bidder." This will help to hire contractors who are ethical, safe, treat employees fairly, and are best qualified to do the work. Cheapest is not always best.

Would you support Responsible Bidder Language?

22) Project labor agreements are often used in building construction projects to ensure quality, efficiency and value. They are the result of a partnership between developers/contractors and building trade unions. These agreements set the terms and conditions for management and labor on construction, maintenance and renovation projects. Private and public construction projects have a successful history of using these agreements, and for publicly- funded projects they ensure taxpayers the best value for their construction dollar. Many contractors also support such agreements. Any legislation to restrict or prohibit Project Labor Agreements is an attack on building trades union members and the constructive relationship they are continuing to build with contractors.

Would you oppose any attempt to restrict or prohibit Project Labor Agreements in private or public construction?

23) More and more contractors are classifying their employees as “subcontractors”. These workers are always the poorest of our community and usually undocumented. They are abused by the human traffickers, known as labor brokers and too scared to do anything about it. The contractor does not pay them fairly, does not have Workers’ Comp insurance, and fails to pay taxes.

Will you fight to stop the misclassification of workers?

SIGNATURE

DATE