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I, Isaiah Thomas, certify that the information provided on this questionnaire is accurate and the opinions stated here accurately reflect my own positions.

Please complete, sign and return this via email in both Word Doc and PDF format to Amanda@reclaimphiladelphia.org on or before February 1, 2019.

INTRODUCTION

This is a two-part questionnaire. The first seven questions are intended to be richer questions with longer answers. They are intended to help the members of Reclaim Philadelphia understand how you view the world and the political issues that face Philadelphia. As you might expect, these questions are big and broad. Please limit your answers to each question to no more than 250 words. The second set of questions are “yes” or “no” questions, which are NOT meant to be answered at length.

PART I - LONGFORM QUESTIONS - Please respond in 250 words or less.

1. Tell us a personal story about yourself that informs your worldview, your politics, and your decision to run for City Council.

When I was a freshman at Frankford High School in Philadelphia, my dad signed me up for the Freedom Schools summer program. He wanted to make sure I had a job and I occupied my time in a positive capacity when I was out of school and didn't have basketball going on. Rooted in the Mississippi Freedom Movement, the Freedom School program is a free six week reading and math enrichment program for students K-8th that focuses on social action, conflict resolutions, intergenerational leadership, and the history of the African diaspora.

Working with Freedom Schools turned out to be the single most influential opportunity of my life. Over time, I moved through the ranks, eventually becoming a senior level supervisor and a national Ella Baker trainer, under the Children's Defense Fund and Marian Wright Edelman. Freedom Schools captivated my attention as I learned the history of indigenous people and the African diaspora. Freedom School showed me that my history didn't start with slavery and that I come from the descendants of greatness. Through this work, I developed a love for education and learning; and was thrust into a leadership position becoming the youngest national trainer. In this role I studied various social movements and the importance of organizing under the umbrella of servant leadership.

Eventually my work in the Freedom Schools program would meet the world of politics when Tom Corbett was elected Governor of Pennsylvania and funding was cut for education. This had a huge impact on the Freedom Schools movement as our funding was cut and more than half the sites were forced to close. That taught me the importance of politics and the impact elected officials have on our everyday life. Through my work with the Freedom Schools movement I developed a relationship with the local state representatives and eventually took a position working part time where I was inspired to run for city council at large. 9 years later, I am working to turn this foundation, into the reality of being a public servant with the heart of a servant leader.

2. What is your opinion of capitalism as a political-economic system? How do your opinions and analysis influence your campaign and legislative priorities?

As a system, capitalism has created extreme economic inequality across the world and particularly among black people and people of color in the United States. In the last forty years as capitalism has transformed, poverty and inequality have only deepened. This is exemplified by the 2008 economic crisis that emerged because of the greed and excessiveness of Wall Street but ended up punishing cities like Philadelphia.

Today we see a small number of people (the 1%) holding the majority of the wealth while people

in cities like Philadelphia are suffering and struggling to survive. This must change if we are to survive as we are destroying the planet and our democracy is in peril. As a legislator, this means I believe that at the least we must deeply reform capitalism so it works for the majority of the world's people or we must re-imagine how we live together in a more equitable. My legislative agenda will reflect the urgency I recognize with growing inequality, democracy under threat and persistent and dangerous climate change.

3. What do "white supremacy" and "patriarchy" mean to you? How do you see them operating in the City of Philadelphia and its gover policies, if any, would you enact in order to end them?

White supremacy is the belief that white people are better than other races. Patriarchy is the system in which men hold power while women are systematically excluded from power. Both concepts are seen everyday in our city as a whole and within our government. Philadelphia has yet to have female mayor and just recently had their first African American female DA. Additionally while women are represented amongst city elected officials, the major power brokers of the city are male. I see the struggle around these issues at multiple levels. First at the level of my campaign and ultimately legislative office, I think it is critical to combat this with daily conscious actions, such as ensuring a balance on my team and those young people I have mentored over the years. With respect to my agenda on City Council, I believe that White supremacy and patriarchy are exemplified through the way that resources are allocated throughout the city and the manner through which some communities garner more privilege and power. Through institutional systems like the school to prison pipeline, over policing, and discriminatory practices, heavily white areas have drastically changed over the past 10 years, thus giving Philly this new look as the next booming metropolis. At the same time, while Philadelphia's downtown has blossomed, African Americans' and the neighborhoods they live in have largely been under resourced, missing this wave of growth. And in some communities, this uneven development has led to gentrification which has forced long term residents, usually people of color, out while wealthier residents move in.

My focus and main motivation will always be improving the life of youth and young people, and through this I believe I can begin to combat these systems of oppression. By working to improve our education system, and fighting for the preservation of the neighborhoods of poor communities across this city I believe we can begin combating these narratives and the broader structures of inequity. Through directing proper resources to all Philadelphians, we will soon see a shift in our city's priorities that will now include a more equal view of what prosperity and growth mean.

4. What do you think of the crisis facing Philadelphia schools? What do you see as its root causes? What steps would you take?

The Philadelphia school system's major issue is lack of resources, which has affected students at all levels. Beginning with the infrastructure that removes the basic right of things like heat and air, in addition to outdated buildings that are poisoning students everyday, with lead paints.

Next, the vulnerable climate and curriculum of schools which is not preparing our students for the future. We need better support for our youth so we can meet the demands of today's and tomorrow's companies, the backbone of our city's great reputation and revenue streams. Fixing these issues that our school district faces will impact the entire city. Quality schools and graduating talent will attract strong employers, which will lead to higher wages and more tax revenue. Better opportunities for youth and more just policing will lead to lower rates of violence and drug use, saving money on enforcement, the court system and prisons. Each of these outcomes is dependent on the foundation we offer the next generation.

To solve these issues, I will work to improve Capacity, Careers and Community Coalitions across Philadelphia. First, capacity, which focuses on improving our youths' abilities through, increased education funding, a high-tech curriculum and leveraging all forms of education. Second, careers, by ensuring the needs of employees and employers are met through job training, favorable conditions for employers, and an increased minimum wage. Finally, through an increase in community coalitions that will protect our communities from violence and incarceration through civic leadership, recreational activities and effective policing partnerships.

Finally, I must point out that a key to fixing our schools is fighting for equitable funding. This happens at the state level, which is not in the purview of city council. However, there are ways to increase funding at the city level. This can happen by either ending the abatement program or at the least recouping the education portion of the abatement program. We can also find other means to tax the wealthy and our corporate citizens to make sure that we have the greatest public education system in the world, which is what the residents of Philadelphia deserve.

5. Under what circumstances should a person be detained or incarcerated, if any? Does the current system meet this criterion? What does safety mean to you and what policies or programs would you pursue to achieve your vision?

A person should be detained or incarcerated if they commit a violent act and have proven to be a risk for to the general population. Our current system does not uphold this model as millions of people, in Pennsylvania alone, sit in jail simply for being poor. We msut fight to decarcerate. Safety means the freedom to live, work, and exists in a space without fearing for your life in anyway. When elected, I will work with police to introduce community policing to keep citizens safe as well as ensure increased funding for afterschool and summer prgograms activities for young people to deter idle time, where violence breeds.

6. What is the fundamental factor causing climate change? How should we address this? Do you support a Green New Deal for Philadelphia and, if so, what does that mean to you and what will

you do if elected to City Council?

One of the major causes of climate change is greenhouse gases that are overheating the Earth. This increase in gas has been brought on by the, first unknowing and then non-caring, industries that have propelled our modern growth. I believe that we as a government and as general citizens should do what we can do slow this effort and if the Green New Deal ensures this and becomes law, I will enforce it as an officer of the public should. At the city level we should look for simple solutions that move towards green solutions that also employ more citizens.

7. Do you think Philadelphia is facing a housing crisis? If so, why? If not, why not? What changes would you make to bring housing policy more in line with your vision?

I believe Philadelphia is in a deep housing crisis, as seen through the great disparity across the city. Our current system has not allowed for the protection of low-income families and have all but shown that they are not included in the new view of Philadelphia. If elected, I will work on fair housing legislation that will protect the rights of all citizens.

PART II - YES OR NO QUESTIONS

1. Do you commit to opposing the privatization of all utilities in Philadelphia? **YES [X] NO []**
However, we need to ensure that infrastructure is updated and in compliance with the EPA regulation, and not allow these aspects to fall to the wayside because it is a public run system.

2. Do you commit to support and vote for the creation of a Philadelphia Public Bank? **YES [X] NO []**

3. Will you support using savings from closing the House of Corrections to invest in job training programs and opportunities for formerly incarcerated people, in an effort to combat mass incarceration? **YES [X] NO []**

4. Will you support a participatory study funded by the City to formulate a local Green New Deal energy plan to transition Philadelphia to a democratically controlled 100% renewable energy system by 2030, create unionized jobs, and center the decisions and needs of Philadelphia's working class and communities of color? **YES [X] NO []**

5. Do you support a democratically elected school board? **YES [X] NO []**
Since running for office in 2015, I have pushed the idea of a hybrid school system, made up of elected and appointed members.

6. Will you commit to publicly funding and administering fully staffed libraries and recreation centers seven days a week? **YES [X] NO []**

7. Do you support rent control? **YES [X] NO []**

8. Will you commit that at least 50% of all City funds allocated to create or preserve housing, including but not limited to the Housing Trust Fund and subfunds, must go toward helping the poorest Philadelphians (30% or less of area median income)? **YES [X] NO []**

9. Will you commit to introducing or sponsoring legislation that would establish a system of public financing for city campaigns that would create a fund that would provide matching public funds for money individual donors contribute to candidates? **YES [] NO [X]**

Corruption can still persist in the public funding system as the process allows for people receiving the money to decide how it is spent, incumbent elected officials. Additionally, with resources as scarce as they currently are, funding political campaigns is not the top priority for citizens.

10. Do you support the creation of an overdose prevention site / supervised consumption site to help efforts to combat the opioid epidemic in our community? **YES [] NO [X]**

11. Do you support completely ending the ten year tax abatement? **YES [X] NO []**
We must ensure that it is done in an economically responsible way.

12. Do you commit to opposing all new fossil fuel projects in Philadelphia by using all zoning and regulatory means at your disposal? **YES [X] NO []**

13. Will you support increasing funding of the Police Advisory Commission from \$500K to \$1.5M and giving it the power to subpoena, investigate and censure cases of police brutality and over-policing?
YES [X] NO []

14. Will you publicly support a moratorium on all charter school expansion? **YES [X] NO []**

15. Do you support the right to strike for public employees including teachers? **YES [X] NO []**

16. Will you enact a statutory right to counsel for any Philadelphian facing the loss of their home, be it foreclosure or eviction? **YES [X] NO []**

17. Will you use all means at your disposal to support workers' right to unionize?
YES [X] NO []

PART III - ADDITIONAL CLARIFICATION

If there's anything else our membership should know about you or if you feel the need to provide additional information about any of your above responses, do so here. Please keep your response to a total of 100 words or less.