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I, Erika Almiron, 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 in college my parents, who are immigrants from Paraguay, had a tragic event occur where they lost their small business in an arson. It was later discovered that the fire was set by my paternal uncle, who was at the time suffering with mental health issues and alcoholism, and his 18 year old son. My family at the time had no supports in navigating the system, had no language access, were confused, broken hearted and alone. So I came home to help my family navigate this process. In the end my uncle was sentenced to 62 years and my cousin, through our advocacy, was given six months. My father spent the next 13 years driving to Graterford

Prison every other weekend to visit his brother and try and have him released. Eventually my uncle died in prison from cancer.

Even as victims we knew early on that what we needed as a family was for us to heal and for my uncle to receive the help he desperately needed. Incarcerating him did none of that and left the burden of healing to my family and while the state spent thousands on locking up my uncle while my parents had to clean houses to pay their mortgage.

Too many of the systems run by our governments are set up to harm people and not enough systems are allowing people to flourish. Too much of our city's resources are being funneled to and wasted on over policing and over incarceration rather than on supporting the families who need us the most.

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

Capitalism has failed to address humans' most basic needs. There is enough food for everyone in the world to eat but just in Philadelphia alone over 325,000 people are food insecure. Capitalism has failed at figuring out how to ensure that all people, regardless of economic background, race, gender or immigration status have access to quality healthcare and education.

We need to culturally, politically and economically reorient our values and priorities from prioritizing profit and profiteers to ones that prioritize humanity and the environment. As a candidate I will listen to those who have been hurt and demoralized by our current political-economic system. I will value and fight for the needs of workers, young people, immigrants, artists, poor people, parents, the formerly incarcerated and senior citizens. I will lift up the expertise of the people who are most affected by our city's unequal systems.

As a city council member I will work to serve those who have benefited the least from our current political-economic system. I will work to expand affordable housing in the city, increase public school funding and access to quality healthcare. I will work to end tax breaks for wealthy real-estate developers and luxury home buyers. I will promote policies that work to reduce incarceration and the money we spend on it.

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

White supremacy is a system that has been used by our country to oppress and isolate people of color based on a lie, that someone's skin color makes them better or more deserving than others. It has been a value that this country was founded on and continues in order to grow. White supremacy is also beyond interpersonal relationships and beliefs of superiority but more importantly, impacts how systems have been built to create isolation and second class citizens through imbedding this belief in our government structures. This is how we end up with our jails

being overly represented with people of color behind bars, or living in poverty and it is no coincidence that the most underfunded schools in our city have mostly black and brown youth. We also see how this plays out in the ways people of color are criminalized through mass incarceration and deportations and how our communities are over policed, therefore giving room for local and national budgets to balloon under the guise of protecting people from “the other” rather than spending our taxes on building up all of our communities. It is this cycle that allows racism and white supremacy to not only exist, but to thrive.

Patriarchy, like white supremacy, is a belief that someone's gender can determine their worth. This is why we see disparities in wages between men and women, why rape culture is still prevalent in our society and how we can live in a country where men can determine what a woman is allowed to do with her own body. As a survivor of sexual assault I have seen how even as a rape survivor you can see how the criminal justice system does not serve us. Millions of women remain silent about their experiences and don't have safe spaces to discuss how to hold the people who have violated them accountable.

It is also important to flag the intersections of white supremacy and patriarchy and to discuss how women of color have to experience both of these oppressions simultaneously, which is reflected in how women of color are the most marginalized in accessing healthcare and services, are also over represented in the criminal justice system and are the most underpaid in comparison to white men.

Both of these systems of oppression manifest themselves in laws, institutions, individuals and the culture at large. There are some leaders and people that actively and knowingly support and perpetuate white supremacy and patriarchy. I believe that it is our role as leaders to identify these systems and the effects they have on people and actively work to dismantle these systems while creating bold visions for a city in which all people have the resources they need to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

In Philadelphia the majority of those living in poverty, attending defunded public schools, currently incarcerated are all people of color. By working to address these issues my candidacy and tenure on city council will be a part of the process of dismantling white supremacy and the patriarchy. When elected to city council I will be only the third woman to be elected to an at-large seat since the year 2000. I believe that it is not just important to symbolically have a working class woman of color elected to citywide office but because I know these systems intimately and have over 20 years experience fighting back against it.

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 root-cause of Philadelphia's public school crisis is chronic underfunding. Pennsylvania has one of the largest funding disparities between wealthy and impoverished school districts of any state in the country. Pennsylvania needs a school funding formula that is needs based and not

overly reliant on local property taxes. As an elected leader I will be a champion for and advocate for a fair and just statewide school funding formula.

On the local level, I will fight for policies that bring more funding to our schools. The 10-year tax abatement for new construction in Philadelphia needs to be fundamentally changed. The city is subsidizing luxury real estate developments at the expense of our public school students. I will also champion a Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) program for Philadelphia's elite hospitals and universities.

As a city council member I will hold the school board and superintendent accountable during the budget approval process and throughout the year and to push for more supports for our children and youth, like counselors, nurses and social workers instead of school police. I will use city council's influence as half the school district's funder to stop future school closings, to push for more culturally competent curriculum, to stop the further privatization and charterization of the school district and to fight against policies that funnel young people into the school to prison pipeline.

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?

I believe that we must build a world where we can address violence and harm in healthy ways that allow us to move forward. That to me means an eventual world where incarceration does not exist. And as we fight for that world we must figure out as a society how we work together to hold people accountable and create space for people to have redemption. The U.S. has more people incarcerated than any other place in the world yet we still have no real way to address the violence we experience.

Our current system is not there yet, so we must both build and dismantle at the same time. We must build a world where we can address this violence while at the same time dismantle every cage that someone is dying in right now. Safety to me is a city where we build up programs that can address violence and hold people accountable and gives formal opportunities to those who cause harm to repair what has happened. Those who have experienced harm should be given the resources and support they need to heal from traumatizing experiences. Those who have harmed and have been harmed should have opportunities to reconcile should they so choose.

I also believe that we must decriminalize poverty and crimes of survival and begin to address issues of poverty by providing resources to program that help people find jobs, trains them and once again, help fund our schools. Over policing and incarceration takes time and resources away from us being able to actually help our community be stronger as a whole. We should work to prevent violence rather than only responding to it.

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?

There are a number of ways to reduce carbon emissions in Philadelphia and I believe we need to prioritize emission reduction and elimination strategies that immediately impact people's lives for the better. I support increasing funding to the Weatherization Assistance Program that make homes more energy efficient for long-term home owners who wouldn't be able to afford repairs without the fund. I support making SEPTA a more appealing option than cars by capping daily/weekly/monthly fares, eliminating transfer fees, free rides for children under the age of 18 and bringing the regional rail system's prices and frequency inline with the rest of the system.

I support a public study to figure out a fossil fuel free future for Philly's energy systems. How to transition to a system that create well-paying, unionized work for an energy system that is publicly owned.

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?

Philadelphia is most definitely facing a housing crisis. We have thousands of people who are homeless in our streets, over 50% of our city are renters where their rent goes up astronomically every year and those who have historically owned homes are pushed out of their neighborhoods because of rising property taxes due to over development and ballooning housing costs. The type of development we currently see in Philadelphia will leave many out of our communities and push those who have built this city out. We're rapidly moving toward a Western European model for cities in which the poor are pushed to the outskirts where housing is cheaper but it is harder to access services. All people have a right to the city. I believe we need to study how to effectively implement rent control, we need to give residents technical and financial support to start resident owned housing co-ops and we need to ensure poor and working class homeowners and homeowners on fixed incomes get property tax relief so that they can stay in their homes. We must also ensure we support ending the tax-abatement that drives over-development in our city for houses most of the people in our city can't afford, drives up property taxes and helps push people out while those who have built those houses don't have to pay any property taxes.

PART II - YES OR NO QUESTIONS

1. Do you commit to opposing the privatization of all utilities in Philadelphia? **YES [X] NO []**
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 []** **This is up for debate. What about communities who can't run for political office; immigrants and young people? How will they have access to a voice on the board if they can't be represented on it? We should consider a hybrid.**

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 [X] NO []**

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 [X] NO []**

11. Do you support completely ending the ten year tax abatement? **YES [X] NO []**

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 [] And we must work to hold those police accountable and continue to push for transparency in the police union contract negotiations that continue to protect police who are violent against our loved ones with impunity

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.