



**AFSCME Council 31  
2019 Aldermanic Candidate  
Questionnaire**



**Completed questionnaires are due no later than close of business on December 10, 2018.** You may fax your responses to 312-861-1672, ATTN: Adrienne Alexander. You can scan and email your responses in as well. If you're interested in an electronic copy, email [aalexander@afscme31.org](mailto:aalexander@afscme31.org).

Candidate Name Derek Lindblom

Office Seeking/Ward Alderman in the 43rd Ward

Phone [REDACTED] Email [info@voteforderek.com](mailto:info@voteforderek.com)

Campaign Address 2733 N Halsted St. Chicago, IL 60614

Website [VoteForDerek.com](http://VoteForDerek.com)

Campaign Manager Kyle Gibson Phone [REDACTED]

Committee Name Friends of Derek Lindblom

Committee Address [REDACTED]

**1. BACKGROUND**

Are you a member of a union? Which one(s) are/have you been affiliated with?

**No**

Have you ever held public office? If yes, during what time period (and for which office)?

**No**

What is your employment background?

**I had the opportunity to begin my career working for the Democrats on the United State Senate Judiciary Committee. There I was able to draft legislation and organize coalitions on comprehensive gun safety, civil rights, equal pay, identify theft, and women’s rights among other issues. I then graduated from Harvard Law where I was the President of the Harvard Law and Policy Review and won the Dean’s Award for Community Leadership for bringing people together across the community.**

**After several years in the private sector as a management consultant, I had the opportunity to work in the Mayor’s Office from 2011 to 2014, where I worked with partners in Labor on some of the most difficult issues that our city faces. I was part of the City of Chicago LMCC Working Group where, with Labor and management working hand-in-hand, we were able to improve healthcare programs for City employees.**

**In City Hall, I also led the City’s winning bid on the \$300 million dollar-plus grant to form UI Labs, the University + Industry partnership making Chicago a leader in digital manufacturing and other industries of the future. UI Labs has significant future untapped potential to drive long-term industrial economic growth in the City of Chicago and the surrounding region. I was also a leader in creating the system that recruited businesses to Chicago, which resulted in strong business and headquarters growth in Chicago.**

**My next stop was in the private sector where I founded health tech companies, helped startups grow, and created jobs. My job was to work with startups to support people with chronic diseases, give more people access to quality, easy-to-use healthcare, and help people live healthier and better lives. One healthcare company that I helped found, Livongo, has created over 300 jobs (entirely U.S.-based) and improved the lives of people with diabetes by bringing cutting-edge technology and personal support to diabetes-management.**

## **2. PRIORITIES**

Briefly describe your key priorities and issue(s) on which you will focus if elected or re-elected.

**Our main policy priorities are improving public safety, maintaining our public schools’ success, stabilizing city finances, and energizing our commercial corridors.**

## **3. RIGHT TO ORGANIZE**

Would you oppose any attempt to weaken the right of workers to organize unions without management interference, and to bargain collectively for wages, benefits, and working conditions?

**Yes, and I have engaged with such legislation during my time in the U.S. Senate. I believe that workers should have the right to organize unions without intimidation or retribution from management.**

Would you be willing to provide public support for employees seeking to organize and meeting employer resistance by (check as many as applicable):

- Speaking at a rally? **YES**
- Asking an employer to remain neutral in an organizing campaign? **YES**
- Holding a hearing to draw attention to employer abuses of worker rights? **YES**
- Sending a letter to employees in support of organizing a union? **YES**

Taxi cabs are a vital part of the city's transportation system. But recent city policy changes have had a major impact on drivers' abilities to stay afloat financially. Drivers today face increased competition from under-regulated "rideshare" competitors. Would you support the following:

- Drivers' union organizing efforts to have a voice in city policies that govern their working conditions, profession and income?

**I think everyone deserves the right to organize free of employer intimidation and retribution, period.**

- Efforts to ensure more balanced regulation of the "rideshare" industry?

**I am for reasonable and thoughtful regulation of rideshare, and I believe every employee has a legal right to organize.**

**This is an area that I am interested in, and believe more study is needed. I have heard anecdotally about congestion and other traffic issues in my neighborhood and want more information about traffic impact before committing to any decision. I'm open to sensible regulation on our streets.**

- An ordinance that would reform the skewed rules and processes that can leave taxi drivers making less than minimum wage?

**I think everyone deserves to make the minimum wage. I am unaware of this particular issue as it pertains to taxi drivers, but am strongly pro-minimum wage and support every worker's ability to earn a minimum wage.**

- Legislation modeled after New York City aimed at establishing minimum earnings standard for "rideshare" drivers and a cap on the number of licenses to keep supply in line with demand?

**I would like to learn more about this legislation, but I'm open to the concept.**

#### 4. REVENUE

Adequately funding the city's on-going operations as well as meeting its pension and other long-term debt obligations will require significant new city revenues in the next four years.

Would you be willing to support generating revenues through higher taxes and fees to maintain and improve vital public services?

**As noted below, I support legalizing and taxing the sale of cannabis, increasing the population, and reforming TIF in order to maintain and improve vital public services.**

If so, which revenue enhancements would you consider supporting?

- Reforming TIFs (Tax Incremental Financing) and restoring the revenues they divert to the city and school district?

**I believe in TIF reform that focuses and limits TIF spending to infrastructure, green space, and schools.**

- Raising the city's portion of the property tax levy?

**No, I am not committing to a property tax increase.**

- Broadening the sales tax to selected services (requires state legislation)?

**I would want to learn more about what selected services are being referenced here before answering this question (seems vague).**

- Instituting a city income tax (requires state legislation)? **NO**
- Other? (please describe)

**I support legalizing and taxing cannabis and efforts to grow the population in order to generate revenue for essential services.**

The State of Illinois also faces huge revenue needs in order to continue funding vital services needed by Chicagoans, including education, health care, human services and public safety. Will you support an amendment to the Illinois constitution allowing for a Fair Tax based on graduated income tax rates?

**I am in favor of the concept of the graduated tax rates as we see at the federal level. I think most discussion needs to be hard on what the specific initiative's rate plans are before committing to support any specific initiative.**

It was previously reported that banks have taken nearly \$800 million in profits from the City of Chicago and Chicago Public Schools through interest rate swap arrangements. Media reports confirm banks and industry professionals misrepresented risks and provided inadequate information in order to secure these agreements, violating rules that require banks to deal fairly and not engage in unfair practices.

Would you oppose efforts to engage in these types of contracts going forward?

**I am against financial instruments that save short-term dollars by giving away huge amounts of long-term risk. Many of these interest rate swap agreements were of this type, and I would oppose any arrangement like those. In general, we must avoid short-term fixes that create inordinate amounts of long-term risk for the City.**

## 5. RETIREES

Chicago's four pension systems are underfunded by \$28B. State law requires that the City of Chicago add an additional \$2.1B by 2023 in order to stabilize the pension funds and ensure that employees receive their constitutionally guaranteed benefits. This will require additional revenue sources.

Do you favor enacting new revenue sufficient to fund the city's pension funds according to this schedule?

**I believe that there are new measures we can use to raise additional revenue such as increasing the population to expand our tax base, as well as legalizing and taxing cannabis.**

Will you oppose efforts to reduce the pension benefits of current or future City of Chicago employees?

**I have worked very deeply in this area, and I am passionate about ensuring that we have a stable and fully funded pension fund. Working with Labor, the city has made significant progress on the issue of pensions. As we tackle the significant challenges that still remain, we can only be successful if we do it together.**

**I have a demonstrated track record of working with, listening to, and moving forward together with Labor. This attitude is how the city got to actuarial full funding of pensions, and together, we can ensure that we are giving retirees and their families the quality of life they have earned and deserved while protecting taxpayers, including the many public employees who pay taxes in the City of Chicago.**

The City of Chicago recently eliminated health care coverage long promised to retired City of Chicago employees. As a result, the City has already cut back on the subsidies it provides for such coverage, causing considerable hardship for many retirees who have only modest pensions and

do not receive Social Security or, in some cases, Medicare. Will you support efforts to reestablish a program of affordable health care for City retirees?

**I am supportive of efforts to better leverage the federal and state exchange to ensure everyone has affordable healthcare coverage. I am not supportive of committing the city to an open-ended healthcare commitment in this area.**

## 6. SERVICE QUALITY

In recent city budgets, the city has responded to revenue shortfalls by reducing front-line staff through attrition and slow-hiring, mandatory furlough days, and lay-offs. The results have meant fewer services in the neighborhoods and long delays for city administrative functions for local businesses. Would you support adequate front-line worker staffing levels to maintain or improve service delivery in the city's budget?

**Service quality at our libraries and City business functions are critically important, and I would partner with the involved Union locals to work to make sure we were meeting or exceeding resident expectations. My family are very active users of our local libraries and understand and appreciate the challenges caused by the hours of operation restriction in this area (among many others).**

An Office of the Inspector General report found that the Chicago Police Department often assigns full-duty sworn officers to jobs that do not need to be performed by sworn personnel. This practice results in higher costs and fewer officers on the streets. Would you support policies to ensure that sworn officers are dedicated to the vital community safety roles they have been trained to carry out, and administrative functions are assigned to appropriate civilian staff?

**I am a believer that jobs that can be staffed by civilians, should be staffed by civilians. Sworn officers should be working directly with the public and dedicated to the community safety roles that they are trained to do.**

In 2011, the Chicago Department of Public Health closed down six City mental health clinics and is neglecting to adequately staff the remaining clinics despite a widely documented crisis in the availability of mental health services, especially for low-income individuals. Would you support strengthening the City's network of CDPH community mental health centers to ensure access for those in need?

**From my time working in creating healthcare companies and technologies, I understand the importance of behavioral and mental health services. I will work with unions to ensure access to these resources, and am open to whatever form that may take, either through the City or by leveraging existing County resources. I believe that we should prioritize and invest in this area generally, as it has significant societal returns.**

## 7. PRIVATIZATION

In recent years, Chicago has become known as the “privatization capitol” of American cities. Major public assets like the Chicago Skyway and city parking meters have been sold or leased out for upfront cash, even though the result is long-term revenue losses to the city. At the same time services now being performed by City employees are being contracted out to private firms, even when there are no significant savings realized and no improvement in services.

Would you oppose further efforts to privatize City services?

**I am very concerned about the city’s history of asset privatization and the selling off of public assets in general. I would lead the scrutinization of any such deal and believe strongly that public assets are best kept public.**

Would you oppose further privatization of public assets that reduce city revenues in the long term and substitute lower wage jobs for family-supporting jobs held by city residents?

**Same as above, I believe public assets are best kept public, and would scrutinize any such deal that did not prioritize what’s best for Chicago taxpayers and residents.**

## 8. CAMPAIGN QUESTIONS

How many petition signatures did you file with to obtain your place on the ballot?

**We submitted over 2,400 signatures to obtain our place on the ballot (after preemptively striking over 170 from our original total of 2,600+)**

Please list the names of your paid staff and consultants with their job duties.

**Kyle Gibson - Campaign Manager**

**Emily Harris - Field Director**

**Alexandra Dent - Field Organizer**

**James Hulsizer - Field Organizer**

Consultants:

**AKPD - Media**

**ALG Research - Research**

**Strategy Group - Mail**

**New Chicago - Fundraising**

How much money have you raised to date?

**At the time of our last public fundraising deadline on September 30th, we had over \$263,000, and we have raised tens of thousands of dollars since then. Our campaign has raised more money from contributors than any other Aldermanic challenger in the City.**

Who are your most notable supporters – elected officials, businesspeople, unions?

**We've received endorsements from former elected officials, which we will be rolling out over the next month.**

***SIGNATURE***

I attest that these answers represent my actions and beliefs, are now part of my public record, and may be used by AFSCME Council 31 to keep union members informed about important issues.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date