

IVI-IPO 2015 CHICAGO ALDERMANIC QUESTIONNAIRE - SECTION 1

WARD

50

NAME

Debra Silverstein

VOTING ADDRESS

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CAMPAIGN ADDRESS

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NUMBER OF PETITION SIGNATURES FILED Approx. 1,700 NUMBER REQUIRED Approx. 473

Please provide the following background information:

A. Elective or appointive public and/or party offices previously held including dates.

Alderman, 50th, May 2011 - present

B. Other elective offices for which you have been a candidate.

n/a

C. What is your primary occupation?

Alderman – I am a full-time Alderman of the 50th Ward.

D. Briefly list your civic activities of the past ten years.

Before taking Office, I was actively helping our 50th Ward community through a variety of ways.

Responsiveness to constituent service issues was so terrible with the previous alderman, that residents would call my husband's Office for help, both the State Senate and Committeeman's offices. I took it upon myself to assist residents through a network of friends that I had established across a variety of City departments. In fact, this was a motivating factor when I decided to run for Alderman in 2011. I saw first hand just how much our Ward was neglected and that there was no help coming without change.

I continue to be involved in organizing a number of community events, including our annual Movie in the Park evening, Back to School and other events that pre-date my first term as Alderman. My Office has continued to expand the community offerings in an effort to deliver services and increase awareness about many issues, such as education, property tax appeals, public safety, health & wellness, senior services and others.

For the last three-plus years I have been working to deliver first-class constituents services to the 50th Ward and reverse many years of inattention to the community's basic needs.

E. What subjects have you studied and what experience have you had which will be most helpful to you in the office you seek?

I am a Certified Public Accountant and practiced for almost twenty-five years and a graduate of the University of Illinois Chicago.

As an accountant, I have worked with small businesses and individuals in tax preparation and assisted with other financial affairs.

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F. What candidates have you supported in past elections? Please be specific in describing your role in each campaign.

My husband is an Illinois State Senator and the 50th Ward Committeeman. I have supported numerous Democratic candidates over the years from Barack Obama to judicial candidates. Through canvassing, phone banking, organizing events and fundraisers, I have been involved in all aspects of numerous campaigns for Democrats in the City of Chicago and surrounding suburbs.

G. Please list all endorsements you have received so far.

My campaign is endorsed by U.S. Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, Illinois Sen. Ira Silverstein, Illinois Rep. Lou Lang, Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart, Cook County Commissioner Larry Suffredin, Water Reclamation Commissioner Mariyana Spyropoulos and I anticipate numerous additional endorsements from local leaders and unions as we move closer to the February elections.

H. As concisely as possible, state why you feel you should be endorsed over the other candidate(s). What goals for the office you seek are most important to you personally?

When I ran for election in 2011, the 50th Ward was in a bad place, from ineffective relationships with public safety officials to our schools not getting enough attention to promised constituent services that would never arrive, and the quality of life was dropping. I promised to turn that around and I have delivered on that promise.

Since taking office, I meet regularly with principals from the public and parochial schools in the 50th Ward. Additionally, I have sponsored Educational Forums to help parents learn more about early childhood, elementary and high school programs.

I have advocated for funding for infrastructure and other improvements and delivered million of dollars in City resources to 50th Ward schools. In 2012 and 2013, Chicago Public Schools invested nearly \$7 million in capital dollars in 50th Ward schools. That includes new lighting at Armstrong Elementary; flooding abatement, new lighting, new lockers and additional facility improvements at Boone Elementary; a new playground, HVAC and chimney repairs and new lighting at Clinton Elementary; new lighting at Decatur Elementary; structural improvements including brickwork, ADA upgrades, new lockers and lighting improvements at Rogers Elementary School; and lighting improvements and security cameras at Stone Elementary. All three un-air conditioned schools (Boone, Decatur and Rogers) now have air conditioning.

We put constituent services first and I have the most responsive and efficient aldermanic office in the City of Chicago. I have close relationships with the City's department commissioners and we work tirelessly to fix potholes, clean sewers, complete tree trims and remove graffiti as quickly as possible. I have maximized investment in our community to benefit our constituents and businesses.

Our ward's streets and alleys were devastated by years of neglect. For years, very little was spent to fix our city streets. Since 2011, I have secured millions of dollars in discretionary funding to repave more than 100 streets in the 50th Ward.

We have eight new parks in our Ward – at my urging, every park has been rebuilt and modernized for residents.

The Ward's greatest business district is being transformed into a first-rate commercial showcase that will rank among the very best in the City when it is completed. Devon Avenue has a bright future for the first time in many years. I delivered a multi-million dollar streetscape project that includes new streets, wider sidewalks, new lighting, street furniture, new planters and trees and features to improve pedestrian safety. This multi-year

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project, which is currently underway, will drive the economy and investment in one of the City's most vibrant business districts.

Our police officials and other first-responders communicate with me over the phone and via text on a daily basis and I have a tremendous staff that is available to help residents. That staff benefits from the strong relationships I have built with our City's departments. Since the start of my term in Office, I, or someone from my staff, have attended all CAPS meetings with residents so we can better understand their concerns and work to identify solutions. In 2011, we initiated a program during which we meet monthly with business owners to address specific issues. This first-of-its-kind program has been very successful and is ongoing. In partnership with Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart, I have hosted several day-long policing events with a multi-jurisdictional task force consisting of numerous public safety agencies, including the 24th Police District. These events, which were the first of their kind in the City of Chicago, flooded the neighborhood with more than 50 Sheriff's Police and Chicago Police officers. The taskforce has netted dozens of arrests in our community including the criminals with outstanding warrants, violent offenders and drug dealers. Drugs and weapons were taken off the streets. Other wards have adopted this program following the successes in the 50th Ward.

I. What is your campaign budget? How much have you raised to date?

We have raised over \$140,000 to date. Our goal is to raise enough to have a full-fledged earned and paid media campaign, including a direct mail component.

J. How many people are on your campaign staff? How many volunteers are on your list?

I currently have one full-time campaign staffer and active volunteers supporting my re-election.

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Most questions on this questionnaire can be answered by checking either YES or NO. Others are essay questions and all have the option of answering in greater detail. Just hit enter at the end of the question and begin typing your answer in the additional space.

CITY COUNCIL REFORM AND ETHICS

	YES	NO	
1.	X		Do you favor maintaining the current number of City Council committees?
			Which committees, if any, would you combine or eliminate? The Office of the Mayor has already reformed the City Council committee structure and I do not have any recommendations for combining or eliminating committees at this time.
2.			What reforms are necessary in the City Council's committee rules and structure? I do not have any recommendations for changing committee rules and structure at this time.
3.	X		Would you give the Inspector General's office independent subpoena power or other compulsory process that can be directed against city officials, agencies and employees without necessitation the approval of the Mayor or Corporation Counsel?
4.	X		Should the Inspector General be able to initiate his or her own investigations of Aldermen without a complaint from outside the office?
5.		X	Should the Inspector General be able to pursue anonymous complaints?
6.		X	Do you support patronage in hiring and promoting public employees?
7.		X	Will you employ or have you employed staff, in your office who hold other public sector jobs concurrently?
8.		X	Will you employ or have you employed staff, in your office who have either outside employment or contracts with entities which do business with the City?
9.	X		Will you vote for an ordinance mandating that the City contest unemployment claims by former employees who were fired for cause?
10.	X		Will you vote for an ordinance forbidding the City to hire or contract the services of anyone previously fired for cause from the City or any other unit of government?
11.		X	Will you support an ordinance to reduce the number of wards?
12.			Have you joined or will you join:
			The Paul Douglas Caucus
			The Independent Progressive Caucus
	X		Both – I would consider joining these caucuses, but I am not currently a member of either caucus.
13.	X		Do you support changing the state statute to return to filling aldermanic vacancies by special election, rather than Mayoral appointment?
14.	X		Will you vote for an ordinance requiring redistricting of the wards to be based on non-partisan criteria and not to benefit any specific individual or political party?
15.		X	Will you or have you accepted campaign donations from current or potential suppliers or employees?
16.		X	Will you or have you accepted campaign donations from people or businesses seeking zoning changes in your ward?
17.		X	Do you support public financing of municipal campaigns?
			Please explain your position. It is a fundamental right for individuals to support the candidates they believe in and that includes the right to make a financial contribution. Additionally, I do not think the will is there among residents for public financing of municipal campaigns. That said, campaign finance law seems to be the wild west at this time and, now more than ever, it is up to

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			individual candidates to be very selective when it comes to from whom they accept contributions. I am very careful to avoid conflicts of interest.
18.	ESSAY		Who are your top 5 contributors and how much has each contributed to your campaign? All of our campaign fundraising information is disclosed through the Illinois State Board of Elections and is available for viewing online.
19.			What changes would you support to the redistricting process? I support a fair and sensible map that best serves the residents of the City of Chicago and specifically my communities. Obviously gerrymandering and picking favorite constituencies, or 'giving away' others, are practices that go against the basic principles of fairness and good sense. Voters should not have to use Google Maps to track their ward boundaries. I am fortunate that the 50th Ward, and my neighbors, have what I would consider normal boundaries with squared off shapes making it easy to delineate who lives where.
REVENUE AND BUDGET			
20.	X		Will you vote to hire independent analysts to conduct a forensic audit of past City spending?
			Will you vote for a budget ordinance which would require:
21.	X		public questioning of city department heads concerning their departments' specific budget requests?
22.			making budget copies available to the public 30 days in advance of hearings? If logistically possible, yes.
23.	X		restoring city-wide community group budget hearings several months prior to the publication of the budget, as were held under the Washington and Sawyer administrations?
24.	ESSAY		What additional revenue sources, if any, would you propose? I support a land-based casino in the City of Chicago. I would support a graduated income tax as long as it had a fair tier structure. I am in favor of a sales tax on large-scale finance transactions, the so-called LaSalle Street Tax. I would consider additional revenue generating measures for the City of Chicago and I acknowledge that this a critical issue in the coming year, but I would have to evaluate all revenue enhancements on a case by case basis and, so far, no comprehensive revenue solution or solutions have been presented to me or the Chicago City Council.
25.	X		Do you support casino gambling for Chicago?
26.		X	Will you vote to require a citywide referendum before any gambling is instituted in the City?
27.		X	Will you vote to roll back Mayoral and Aldermanic salaries to pre-2007 levels?
28.			Will you vote for an ordinance limiting future Mayoral and Aldermanic salary increases to the same percentage as the lowest raise for any class of city employees? The position of Alderman is a 24-7 job. I am a full-time alderman committed to serving the 50th Ward under any and all circumstances and I think small annual salary increases based on the cost of living are reasonable.
29.		X	Do you agree with the criticism that City government is top heavy with management?
	ESSAY		Please explain your position. Cutting personnel is not the way to increase responsiveness for constituent services. For example, our forestry department is more than 18 months behind in service calls. Rodent

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		<p>control needs help as well and everyone benefits when we have more people out on the streets helping address our basic needs.</p> <p>Public service is not where people go to make their fortunes. I think the City is operating in a fairly lean fashion. The Mayor has put in place very professional department supervisors who are committed to efficiency and enhancing the way we serve residents.</p> <p>The City Council has signed off on numerous initiatives to consolidate office space and pare down expenses. Any additional cuts in personnel would be detrimental to the public and we should carefully consider additional reductions and the potential impact on service delivery.</p>
30.	ESSAY	<p>What measures will you vote for to reform the city pension plan and ensure its solvency? The City Council and the Illinois General Assembly are going to face some major challenges in 2015. However, we have yet to see a comprehensive budget proposal take shape in either elected body to address the pension crisis.</p> <p>As I indicated in an earlier response, I would support a graduated income tax as long as it had a fair tier structure. I support a casino for the City of Chicago. I am in favor of a sales tax on large-scale finance transactions, the so-called LaSalle Street Tax.</p>
31	ESSAY	<p>How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public employee pensions?</p> <p>Legislators need to deliver on promises made to employees and retirees. I agree with the courts that Senate Bill 1, the legislation that cut COLA increases, was unconstitutional. I also agree with the Illinois Supreme Court's decision in July that prevents any diminishment of health care benefits for retired state employees. I oppose further attempts to cut pension benefits for City employees and retirees.</p>
32.	Choose One	Should discretionary funds for ward services and infrastructure improvements be allocated
		in equal amounts to each ward
	X	based on the size of each ward
		based on the needs of each ward
	YES	NO
33.		<p>Will you institute participatory budgeting to allow ward residents to vote on discretionary spending in your ward?</p> <p>Our Office is responsive and my priorities are constituent-driven. We take requests from constituents over the phone, email, social media and in response to our weekly email newsletter. The lines of communications are open and we build wish lists and pass along those requests to the departments that serve the Ward. Our program to help constituents is effective.</p> <p>Participatory budgeting is dependent on assigning staff that will spend many, many hours ensuring the project is administrated in a fair and equitable way. I do not want to take staff away from constituent services and shift them over to this task, at this time. Additionally, I have concerns that, even under the best conditions, participatory budgeting in instances I have observed only counts a small fraction of residents as actual participants.</p>

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			<p>Moreover, in our Ward, the infrastructure challenges were very clear. All someone had to do, prior to my election in 2011, was look down the street to see how terribly maintained the roadways were. Year after year, I heard the same complaints from neighbors. In fact, I learned that, before I took Office, very few streets had been repaved for three years using discretionary funds.</p>
PRIVATIZATION			
34.	ESSAY		<p>Which city services or assets, if any, do you believe should be privatized and what is your criteria? I oppose the privatization of public assets and I will continue to fight efforts to sell off City assets. I support the Privatization Transparency and Accountability Ordinance to establish a process to provide for public input and City Council review of any proposed City privatization plans.</p>
35.	X		<p>Will you vote for an ordinance requiring an independent analysis of any lease or outsourcing arrangement?</p>
36.	X		<p>Will you vote for an ordinance requiring detailed analysis and evaluation of any lease or outsourcing arrangement at least 30 days prior to the City Council vote?</p>
37.	ESSAY		<p>Before voting on privatization contracts, what will you do to ensure that they deliver the maximum return and best service for city residents in the long term? I completely oppose the privatization of public assets.</p>
38.	ESSAY		<p>What procedures will you implement to ensure that privatization arrangements are not being used to move patronage workers outside of the scope of the Rutan decision requirements or any other anti-patronage rules or protocols? Again, I completely oppose the privatization of public assets.</p>
PLANNING, ZONING, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
39.	ESSAY		<p>How will you involve ward residents in planning? We are very inclusive in all planning and development projects, small, big and in between. Using Devon Avenue as an example, we have hosted nearly a dozen community meetings and more involving business owners. Residents and business owners were an important part of the decision making process, from where to install street furniture to how and when the project should start and finish. I brought in department heads from the City of Chicago, as well as the Mayor, so residents could speak with them directly about the scope and impact of the project. Our Special Service Area members and Chamber of Commerce were involved as well. All stakeholders continue to be a part of the redevelopment of this critical business district.</p> <p>It is only fair that the people who are impacted by planning and development are heard when it comes to various projects and, more that just heard, their voices affect and dictate the outcomes of these meetings. All zoning changes in the 50th Ward require a community meeting.</p>
40.	ESSAY		<p>What is your long-range plan for development of the ward? We are working on Devon Avenue and I would like to see improvements in the Touhy Avenue and Western Avenue business corridors and, while it will take time to realize these changes, I see a better future for these areas. Recently a strip of storefronts along</p>

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		<p>Touhy Avenue that were vacant for five to ten years were sold and we should see new businesses moving in to those locations.</p> <p>My Office has been effective in filing empty storefronts. A recently shuttered Dominick's is now home to a completely refurbished and modern Cermak grocery store. Additional new businesses include Starbuck's, Petco, Ross Dress for Less, Chase, Culver's (coming soon), Advance Auto Parts, O'Reilly Auto Parts, Wing Stop, Lickity Split (a new ice cream shop that should open this spring), Relish and a new Ted's Market, among others.</p>
41.	ESSAY	<p>What criteria do you or will you use in determining whether or not to grant a zoning change or variance?</p> <p>I look to my residents to provide feedback and direction when it comes to a zoning change or variance.</p>
42.	ESSAY	<p>How will you involve residents in planning, approval, and oversight of TIF districts?</p> <p>Our SSA commissioners are very involved in making decisions about how the Devon/Western TIF is used to help the community. I consider expanding this type of arrangement to additional TIFs, however, the funding is not plentiful enough, or the funds have already been committed to projects, prior to my 2011 election, in the other TIFs to make this a priority at this time.</p>
43.	X	<p>Will you vote to terminate a TIF if the objectives of the TIF plan have been accomplished before the 23 year period is ended?</p>
44.	X	<p>Will you vote to return unspent and uncommitted TIF funds on an annual basis to the various taxing bodies?</p>
45.	ESSAY	<p>How do you propose to replace property tax revenue for CPS and other taxing bodies that is lost to TIF development?</p> <p>In 2011, I publicly joined Cook County Clerk David Orr in calling for a moratorium on new TIFs pending a comprehensive audit to evaluate how the TIF system can be reformed.</p> <p>The City of Chicago is actively reforming its TIF program and implementing more sensible policies. The 2014 and 2015 budgets include a TIF Surplus of \$50 million and \$60 million respectively. Of this amount, 20 percent was earmarked for the City of Chicago, 50 percent was earmarked for the Chicago Public Schools and the remainder was designated for the City's sister agencies, such as the CTA and the Chicago Park District. This systematic "surplusing" of the TIF funds allowed CPS to avoid scheduled budget cuts this year. These are dramatic steps in the right direction.</p> <p>My goal is to continue to use TIF dollars strategically to ensure these funds are solvent and used for smart, carefully selected projects that are supported by constituents and the business community. When that is not happening, I support efforts to direct these funds back to the taxing bodies, such as CPS.</p>
46.	X	<p>Will you support a moratorium on creation of any new TIF districts until new funding sources are identified to replace the revenue diverted to the TIF?</p>
47.	X	<p>Will you vote for an ordinance requiring that large corporate entities receiving \$250,000 or more in public subsidies, and their tenants, must pay their workers a living wage (currently \$11/hour)?</p>
48.	X	<p>Will you vote to invest substantially more in job-training and the creation of transitional job programs in disadvantaged communities, including the formerly incarcerated, homeless, youth,</p>

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			and non-English speakers?
HOUSING			
49.	X		Will you vote to amend the Vacant Properties Ordinance to require mortgage servicers to register their properties?
50.	X		Do you support enacting an ordinance to preserve Single-Room Occupancy housing?
51.	X		Will you vote for an inclusionary zoning ordinance requiring developers to set aside 30% of residential new construction or renovation for the creation of affordable housing?
52.	ESSAY		<p>What measures will you support to guarantee that some of the foreclosed properties saved through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program are made affordable to families at 40% and 60% of AMI?</p> <p>I will work with housing advocates and City agencies to put working families in the foreclosed properties in our Ward.</p>
53.	ESSAY		<p>What procedures and safeguards would you put in place on conversion/demolition of SRO's and other low income housing to ensure that affordable housing will continue to be available for low income tenants who would otherwise be displaced?</p> <p>I voted for the Single-Room Occupancy Preservation Ordinance to set in motion a five-year plan to preserve over 40,000 units of affordable housing in the City of Chicago.</p> <p>I am optimistic the Affordable Requirements Ordinance will be updated to require developers to either include affordable housing in the projects or pay stiff fees earmarked for affordable housing. I am open to the recommendations of the Chicago Coalition for the Homeless and other organizations to enhance the ARO.</p> <p>I have voted in the Chicago City Council to ensure that tenants' rights are represented. I co-sponsored the Keep Chicago Renting Ordinance to protect working class residents by requiring banks foreclosing on a property to provide the tenants a rent-controlled lease until selling the property or pay them a "relocation assistance" fee of \$10,600 per unit.</p> <p>This ordinance and the Bed Bug Ordinance which I co-sponsored, to make landlord more responsible for the conditions in which their renters live, were both driven by neighborhood, grassroots organizations. I believe very strongly in standing up for people who do not have a voice or deep pockets to ensure their interests are represented.</p>
54.	ESSAY		<p>What measures will you support to ensure that there is an adequate supply of affordable family sized units available to families in the Section 8 program?</p> <p>We have a wide range of housing options in the 50th Ward. We are very unique in that sense and I intend to make sure those options continue to be available so our Ward remains a diverse place open to people of all backgrounds.</p> <p>I have worked with City housing agencies and police to make sure our landlords are respectful of their tenants and neighbors. We have worked with landlords and police to make sure that problem tenants are removed.</p>
55.	ESSAY		<p>What measures will you support to provide affordable housing for low-income individuals and families who are not served by any existing programs?</p> <p>As I have indicated above, I am open to working with housing advocates in any way that will help low-income and working families, especially those not served by existing</p>

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		programs.
	YES	NO
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
56.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
57.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
58.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
59	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
60	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
61.	Choose One	
		Which standard should the City use to define affordable housing?
		AMI of the Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area
		AMI of Cook County
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AMI of Chicago
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AMI of the Community Area Depending on the neighborhood, using the AMI from a specific community area may be a better fit than that of the City.
EDUCATION		
62.	Choose One	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Which of the following options for choosing the School Board do you support?
		Popular Election
		Mayoral appointment from nominations made by community representatives
		Maintaining the current system of Mayoral appointment
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	A mix of elected and appointed members
	YES	NO
63.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
64.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
65.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
66.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
67.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
68.	ESSAY	
		What is your assessment of Renaissance 2010 and its implementation in your ward as well as the City as a whole? Please include in your assessment the role of charter schools as well as the power to reconstitute schools. We do not have any charter schools in our Ward, so we were not impacted by Renaissance 2010. I think the charter school movement has been stopped in its tracks and that is a good thing for the City. I do not think the City should close additional schools. Thankfully our Ward was spared from the type of changes that can damage a whole community.

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		<p>I am on the record as supporting a moratorium on additional charter schools – in fact I have co-sponsored two resolutions in favor of moratoriums and, in doing so, broke very publicly from the Mayor. The reason for this decision was because charters schools are not unionized, they are subject to different standards, they are not as accountable as public schools. Additionally, there appears to be a pattern of impropriety and corruption among at least one charter school group, among other concerns.</p> <p>Given the fact that the City has shuttered 50 public schools, it is inherently wrong to open additional for profit schools in the City.</p>
69.	ESSAY	<p>What should the City do to improve the quality of all local schools? Residents should be able to take great pride in public education in the City of Chicago and, citywide, we have some work to do.</p> <p>That said, key indicators are trending in the right direction. Graduations rates are up, hitting a record high of 70 percent for the school year that ended last spring. More young people are going to school with attendance rates over 90 percent. While they need further improvement, ACT scores are at a record high and graduation rates at City colleges are expected to triple over the next three years.</p> <p>The City is helping bridge the gap between wealthy and poor neighborhoods by expanding early childhood development and increasing education opportunities. We are going to provide free pre-K to low income families starting next year. The earlier children start their education, the better, and I support these efforts.</p> <p>I believe more programs to increase parental involvement are needed to better connect schools to our communities.</p>
70.	ESSAY	<p>What are your plans to improve the local schools in your ward? Step one is listening to parents, teachers and principals and delivering for them and I have done that.</p> <p>Under my leadership, in 2012 and 2013, Chicago Public Schools invested nearly \$7 million in capital dollars in 50th Ward schools. That includes new lighting at Armstrong Elementary; flooding abatement, new lighting, new lockers and additional facility improvements at Boone Elementary; a new playground, HVAC and chimney repairs and new lighting at Clinton Elementary; new lighting at Decatur Elementary; structural improvements including brickwork, ADA upgrades, new lockers and lighting improvements at Rogers Elementary School; and lighting improvements and security cameras at Stone Elementary. All three un-air conditioned schools (Boone, Decatur and Rogers) now have air conditioning.</p> <p>Locally, I am very proud of our schools. Before I took Office, there was no meaningful relationship among school officials and educators and the 50th Ward Alderman. I meet regularly with principals from the public and parochial schools in the 50th Ward. Additionally, I have sponsored Educational Forums to help parents learn more about early childhood, elementary and high school programs.</p>

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		<p>All of my 50th Ward elementary schools recently earned the much sought after +1 designation, ranking them among the very best school in the City of Chicago. The 50th Ward is home to the best elementary school district in the State of Illinois – Decatur Elementary.</p> <p>Our schools are on the right track, in part, because I have delivered million of dollars in City resources to 50th Ward schools.</p>
71.	ESSAY	<p>How would you modify (if at all) the benefit and contribution levels and eligibility requirements for public school teacher pension?</p> <p>Legislators need to deliver on promises made to employees and retirees. I agree with the courts that Senate Bill 1 that cut COLA increases was unconstitutional. I also agree with the Illinois Supreme Court’s decision in July that prevents any diminishment of health care benefits for retired state employees. I oppose further attempts to cut pension benefits for City employees and retirees.</p>
ENVIRONMENT		
72.	X	Will you vote for the Clean Power Ordinance?
73.		X Will you vote to privatize Chicago's water delivery system?
74.	X	Will you vote to ban Styrofoam food containers in Chicago public schools?
75.	X	Will you vote to ban Styrofoam food containers in Chicago restaurants and food delivery services?
76.	X	Will you vote to adopt the water quality standards recommended by the Pollution Control Board?
77.	ESSAY	<p>What should the City do to encourage and implement alternative forms of energy?</p> <p>Chicago is a national business center for wind power and solar energy and the city should work with businesses to see how it can help them stay in Chicago, expand and thrive.</p> <p>I would support infrastructure projects, such as the “Rock Island Clean Line,” to help transmit and deliver renewable energy to Chicago from locations in central Illinois and Iowa.</p> <p>I am a supporter of Retrofit Chicago, which has helped nearly 50 buildings realize energy savings by investing in sustainable development and energy efficiency. The Retrofit Chicago Residential Partnership has helped over 13,000 homeowners and delivered millions in energy savings.</p> <p>I would support incentives for businesses to incorporate renewable energy projects into the infrastructure of construction or other types of infrastructure projects.</p>
78.	ESSAY	<p>What other environmental initiatives, if any, do you propose?</p> <p>Our drinking water must be safeguarded. I would support additional protections for Lake Michigan, such as a ban on fracking or other types of drilling within the water table affecting the Great Lakes.</p> <p>I support tighter restrictions on petcoke and other pollutants. For profit polluters are not welcome in the City of Chicago. We should not allow corporations to benefit at the detriment to the health of our residents.</p>

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PARKS			
79.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Do you support election of the Chicago Park District Board?
80.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Do you support increased privatization of park facilities and services?
	ESSAY		Why or why not? Privatization has proved to be a disastrous policy and I oppose the concept on general principle.
81.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Do you support prioritization of land acquisition and capital improvements first to those neighborhoods which are underserved by existing facilities?
TRANSPORTATION			
82.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Will you vote to increase the City subsidy to the CTA?
83.	Rank 1-5 or say no to any		Please indicate which CTA expansion plans, if any, you support and rank them in order of priority (1 highest)
	1		Red Line south to 130th Street
	2		Orange Line to Ford City Mall
	3		Downtown Circulator
	4		Downtown-O'Hare Express I would need more information about this project.
			Other – please specify Public transportation and investment in infrastructure is critical to the future of the City of Chicago, both from an economic and quality of life standpoint. At this point in time, I would prioritize projects that can help people get from the far reaches of the City to their places of employment and deliver an economic boost over those that may help tourists of visitors to the City.
	YES	NO	
84.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Do you support renegotiation of Chicago's parking meter privatization deal?
85.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Do you support privatization of Midway Airport?
86.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Do you support the O'Hare expansion plan?
CRIMINAL JUSTICE			
87.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Is 911 response time adequate?
	ESSAY		If not, how can it be improved? The 24th and 17th Districts are among the City's very best and I do not receive a lot of complains regarding 911 response time. When the issue has come up, I have been able to discuss it directly with OEMC and our Police Commanders and I am satisfied with the responses I have received.
88.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Are there inequities in 911 service in your ward?
	ESSAY		If so, what can be done to redress them? The service times are reasonable across the 50th Ward. If there is a change, I will work aggressively to remedy the issue and I have the relationships with our local, and city, police officials to do that.
89.		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Do you support re-allocating police services from low-crime to high-crime neighborhoods?
90.	ESSAY		What changes, if any, would you suggest for the CAPS program? I personally participate in CAPS. I think additional funding in promoting and highlighting what CAPS can do for a neighborhood is a good place to start. We have very active CAPS groups, but I think we could reach out to new people to get them involved.

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			Nearly every month, I meet with public safety officials and business owners to help make Devon Avenue safer for them and their customers. I take this and other opportunities to bring our police and our residents together for proactive meetings and I look at this as an effort to go beyond what CAPS offers.
91.	X		Will you vote for more funding for alternative crime prevention programs such as Cease Fire?
92.		ESSAY	<p>What measures will you support to stop the schools to prison pipeline? I support the expansion of the City's summer jobs programs. Every student placed in a work environment has a better shot at learning important skills so they can be employed in the future.</p> <p>I support a longer school day and a longer school year. Each hour spent in school is, or should be, an hour well spent. This is the best way to keep students busy and focused on their future.</p> <p>Under a new initiative, all high school graduates with a 'B' average will receive free tuition to the Chicago City Colleges. This is an unprecedented and tremendous step in the right direction.</p> <p>As I mentioned earlier, The City is helping bridge the gap between wealthy and poor neighborhoods by expanding early childhood development and increasing education opportunities. We are going to provide free pre-K to low income families starting next year. The earlier children start their education, the better, and I support these efforts.</p>
93.	X		Do you support gun control?
94.		ESSAY	<p>What measures, if any, should the City Council adopt in response to recent court decisions striking down Chicago's handgun ban? The City should pursue all options when it comes to protecting the public and keeping dangerous people from accessing to guns. Those who use them in the commission of crime should receive strong sentences to ensure they do not return to our streets.</p>
95.	X		Will you vote to order the City to stop paying legal fees and attempt to recover past legal costs of city employees implicated in the Police Board findings of misconduct related to the Burge case?
96.		ESSAY	<p>Please share your views regarding the functioning of the Independent Police Review Authority and whether it should operate more independently of the Police Department. I favor measures that hold police accountable. Those who fail to uphold the law, or meet the high standards we have for police officers should be accountable for their actions.</p>
CIVIL RIGHTS			
97.	X		Do you support affirmative action based on race, gender and sexual orientation in establishing criteria for hiring and promoting public employees?
98.	X		Do you support affirmative action as a criteria in letting city contracts?
99.		ESSAY	<p>Please comment on current participation of individuals with disabilities in city hiring and contracts. I would like to see individuals with disabilities have a higher level of participation when it comes to hiring opportunities and contracts with the City of Chicago.</p>
100.		ESSAY	<p>Please comment on current women and minority participation in city hiring and contracts. Be sure your comments include firefighter and police officer recruitment and promotion. Our City employees, including police and firefighters, should look like the people you see when you visit neighborhoods across of the City of Chicago. Until that happens, we have</p>

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		more work to do. When it comes to recruiting the underrepresented, the City should take a lead on going out and bringing in the best and brightest and most-qualified from all of our communities.
101.	X	Do you favor restructuring the wage scale of city employees to institute gender-equal pay for jobs of comparable worth?
102.	X	Will you vote to require all City vendors and contractors to provide spousal benefits for same-sex partners of their employees?
103.	X	Will you vote for the Municipal ID ordinance?
	ESSAY	<p>Why or why not? Our City is a city of immigrants and my ward is a ward of immigrants. We should do all we can to put people who are new to our country on equal footing as those who have been here for decades. It is the decent and fair thing to do.</p> <p>No resident should be barred from having something as basic as access to non-predatory banking, a doctor, a dentist or insurance, just because they do not have a status that historically has not afforded them access to these services.</p> <p>If a municipal ID can help provide a safety net for new immigrants and others, we should support it.</p>
E		
ALDERMANIC PRIORITIES		
104.	ESSAY	What employment, if any, other than alderman, do you intend to hold? None.
105.	ESSAY	How will you divide your time between your aldermanic duties and your other occupation? I am a full-time alderman.
106.	ESSAY	Please specify the minimum hours per week you will spend performing your aldermanic duties. I regularly spend upwards of 60-hours a week on serving my community.
107.	ESSAY	<p>Please describe your service office staffing plan, including the number of staff, full and part time, how you will pay for them, and the number of hours per week that your service office will be open.</p> <p>Our Office is open five days a week, Monday through Friday. We host after-hours constituent service hours on Monday evenings.</p> <p>My budget includes three full-time staffers and additional part-time staff.</p>
108.	ESSAY	<p>What services need improvement in your ward? How will you achieve this?</p> <p>I will continue to invest in our schools, work to make the Ward safer and rebuild our critical infrastructure. Continued communication with residents is a critical part of determining additional areas that need attention. Schools, public safety and constituent services have been my priorities in my first term and will remain the focus for my Office.</p>
109.	ESSAY	<p>What are your top priorities for the Ward?</p> <p>Public Safety</p> <p>I have put a tremendous amount of work toward establishing a strong relationship among my Office, the 24th Police District, the 17th Police District, the Office of the Cook County Sheriff, my constituents and the business community. When I took Office in May 2011, these relationships did not exist.</p> <p>Since the start of my term in Office, I - or someone from my staff - have attended all CAPS meetings with residents. .</p>

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In partnership with Cook County Sheriff Tom Dart, we have hosted several special, day-long policing events with a multi-jurisdictional task force with numerous public safety agencies, including the 24th Police District.

These events, which were the first of their kind in the City of Chicago, flooded the neighborhood with more than 50 Sheriff's Police and Chicago Police officers. The taskforce has netted dozens of arrests in our community including the criminals with outstanding warrants, violent offenders and drug dealers. Drugs and weapons were taken off the streets. Other wards have adopted this program following the successes in the 50th Ward.

Constituent Services

We put constituent services first and I have the most responsive and efficient aldermanic office in the City of Chicago. I have close relationships with the City's department commissioners and we work tirelessly to fix potholes, clean sewers, complete tree trims and remove graffiti as quickly as possible.

I have maximized investment in our community to benefit our constituents and businesses.

Our ward's streets and alleys were devastated by years of neglect. For years, very little was spent to fix our city streets. Since 2011, I have secured millions of dollars in discretionary funding to repave more than 100 streets in the 50th Ward. These improvements were not only funded by the City of Chicago, but also by the State of Illinois.

The infrastructure throughout our premier business district along Devon Avenue was crumbling and desperately out of date. After petitioning the Office of the Mayor and working with other elected officials, I delivered a multi-million dollar streetscape project that includes new streets, wider sidewalks, new lighting, street furniture, new planters and trees and features to improve pedestrian safety. This multi-year project, which is currently underway, will drive the economy and investment in one of the City's most vibrant business districts.

The streetscape project includes \$1.7 million in state funding.

I obtained an additional \$1 million in state funding for an expansion of the North Shore Channel Bike Trail. This money will allow us to build a new crossing for the trail at Lincoln Avenue, giving the 50th Ward's residents a beautiful and fully connected bike path that stretches for many miles to the north and south.

Additional state funding includes over \$1 million for residential street lighting.

When I ran for Office, I pledged to improve our community's many parks. I delivered on that promise and secured funding for eight state-of-the-art neighborhood playgrounds, one for each of the parks in the 50th Ward.

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		<p><i>Education</i> Before I took Office, there was no meaningful relationship between school officials and education advocates and the 50th Ward Alderman. I meet regularly with principals from the public and parochial schools in the 50th Ward.</p> <p>Additionally, I have sponsored Educational Forums to help parents learn more about early childhood, elementary and high school programs.</p> <p>I have advocated for funding for infrastructure and other improvements and delivered million of dollars in City resources to 50th Ward schools.</p> <p>In 2012 and 2013, Chicago Public Schools invested nearly \$7 million in capital dollars in 50th Ward schools. I outlined how that money was allocated above.</p> <p>Additional funding has been earmarked for our schools for 2015.</p>
110.	ESSAY	<p>How will you work with community groups and residents on City matters? I have an open door policy when it comes to meeting with community groups and residents. On Monday nights, I meet with whoever comes by to visit our Office.</p> <p>I have a track record of working with community groups to drive and pass meaningful legislation.</p> <p>My 2011 campaign was actively supported by UNITE HERE Local 1 and, after I was elected to office, I lobbied on behalf of their members in support of a living wage for their employees. In September 2014, I was proud to see an executive order come forth to immediately increase the minimum wage for all City service, construction and concession contract employees. This action helped deliver on an agreement I had with UNITE HERE to advocate for them in the City Council.</p> <p>The Dangerous & Vacant Buildings Ordinance was created with the help of fire officials in the wake of several tragic incidents during which firefighters were killed while working in dangerous truss construction buildings. The firefighters had no information about the fact that these buildings were prone to collapse. Now these buildings are designated in the databases used by firefighters and police and these first responders are notified in advance of arriving at a location.</p>