



GBLC Boston Mayor Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Bill Walczak

Campaign Address: 1370 Dorchester Avenue

Campaign Phone: 617-858-1242

Campaign Email Address: bill@billforboston.com

Campaign Manager: Don Walsh

Office Sought: Mayor of Boston

Previous Elected/Appointed Office Held (if any): N/A

Please return this questionnaire to:
By Mail: Greater Boston Labor Council, AFL-CIO
6 Beacon Street, Suite 910 Boston, MA 02108
Or By Fax: 617-732-2480.
Or By Email: rogers@gblc.us

If you have questions please contact Rich Rogers at (617) 723-2370.

Collective Bargaining

State and federal law requires all employers to bargain in good faith with labor union bargaining units. If employers fail to bargain in good faith charges can be filed. However, charges often take years to litigate and reach a settlement. Labor unions and employers have come to rely on community activity to help move the bargaining process along.

Would you work to settle collective bargaining agreements in Boston in a timely fashion?

YES

NO

Will your administration adhere to arbitration awards rendered by the Commonwealth's Joint Labor Management Committee?

YES

NO

Comments: **Generally, though I would need more information on specifics of each decision and how the decision affects the city.**

Would you use the moral authority of your office to assist private sector unions in your community settle collective bargaining disputes?

YES

NO

Comments:

In 2011 Mayor Menino entered a landmark Agreement with all of the city unions to bargain health insurance issues in a collaborative and cooperative manner through coalition bargaining as authorized by MGLc. 32B, section 19. The city and the unions entered a four year agreement governing health insurance and created a Public Employee Committee (PEC) through which decisions around health benefits are now made. The City estimates that these efforts will save or slow cost growth by \$70 million over the life of the agreement. Moreover, the PEC and the City have forged an ongoing working relationship that has resulted in additional changes, improvements, and cost savings since the initial Agreement. The parties have spent the past year studying potential innovations and cost saving measures that could be implemented as part of the next phase of extending or renewing this Agreement.

Will you commit to continuing this joint labor-management process as the means of making health insurance benefit decisions when you become Mayor?

YES

NO

Specifically, will you renew the current Section 19 Agreement with the PEC prior to its expiration in 2015?

YES

NO

Comments: If it continues working well.

As part of the process of renewing the Section 19 Agreement, will you continue the current emphasis on seeking overall cost savings measures through approaches such as managing chronic disease, enhancing employee & retiree wellness, and seeking lower cost yet high quality providers, rather than focusing primarily on shifting costs onto employees and retirees?

YES

NO

Will you maintain Retiree premium contributions during your term(s) as mayor?

YES

NO

Comments: **It depends on financial conditions of the city.**

The current administration is supporting legislation on Beacon Hill that would move as many as 40 Boston Public schools from level 3 status into level 4 or 'Turnaround' status. Teachers in schools designated 'Turnaround' status are stripped of many of their collective bargaining rights and have little or no say in the length of the school day and year, assignment rights and added compensation.

What is your position on this proposed legislation which is pending on Beacon Hill?

Support

Oppose

Comments: **I am willing to support a collaborative approach to this, provided agreements allow a level of autonomy and accountability that will allow these schools to succeed.**

Responsible Employer Language

As you are aware, the City of Boston has adopted a "Responsible Employer Ordinance" that requires contractors who wish to bid on public projects to provide health insurance for all employees (including part time workers); be affiliated with a state or federal certified apprenticeship training program; maintain workers' compensation insurance for all employees; classify workers as employees rather than as independent contractors; and comply with local residency and/or affirmative action requirements.

Are you committed to implementing and enforcing Boston's "Responsible Employer Ordinance"?

YES

NO

Will you ensure that unions affiliated with the Greater Boston Labor Council and/or the Boston Building Trades Council are represented on the enforcement committee that the "Responsible Employer Ordinance" creates?

YES

NO

Under the current administration, the Building Trades have been represented on the Boston Redevelopment Authority, the Zoning Board of Appeals, the Planning Board and the Boston Employment Commission. Will you continue to ensure that the building trades will continue to have representation on these boards and commissions?

YES

NO

Comments:

Economic Development

Rather than traditional economic development strategies that emphasize tax cuts, tax incentives, business relocation expenses and other subsidies, the labor movement is

attempting to attach standards and a system of public accountability to the dissemination of any public funds, public subsidies or tax breaks. Such a system would reward 'good' employers who have high wage jobs with career ladder and benefits

Would you support progressive, pro-worker economic development strategies in the City of Boston that encourages good jobs and wages both during construction of a project and for the permanent jobs? Would you seek to ensure that contractors abide by the City's Responsible Employer Ordinance?

YES

NO

Comments: **However, employees must also agree to follow the requirements of the Boston Resident Jobs Policy to be considered "good."**

In November of 2011, Governor Deval Patrick signed into law gaming legislation that will allow up to three casinos to be licensed in the Commonwealth. The Greater Boston Labor Council voted unanimously to support Suffolk Downs' efforts to receive a gaming license at its January 3rd 2012 meeting.

Do you support Suffolk Downs' proposal to be granted a license to build a resort gaming facility on its property located in East Boston and Revere?

YES

NO

Comment: **This will be voted upon by people who will be affected by the casino. I will abide by the vote but would like to see alternatives that create jobs in the event that the vote fails.**

It takes a good job to support a family and it will take many good jobs to strengthen our communities. It has been estimated that in Massachusetts one third of the jobs are not good jobs, below \$17 an hour, with no benefits, and many part time. The same is generally true for Boston. As mayor, what strategies and what governmental tools would you use to address the challenge of making these bad jobs into good jobs?

Comments: **I believe we need to attract jobs that pay living wages for Boston and transform our educational system so that students from our schools are able to get these jobs.**

Privatization

When services currently performed by public employees are privatized vendors and contractors routinely submit bids that cut costs by reducing benefits and wages for workers. Will your administration refrain from privatizing public services unless assurances are given that wages and benefits will be maintained and that further assurances will require that taxpayers will actually save as a result of privatizing public services?

YES

NO

Comments:

Wal-Mart

Labor and community groups have long had concerns about Wal-Mart because of its long history of paying substandard wages and benefits and distributing misinformation and anti-union propaganda to Associates. Recently Wal-Mart has begun to aggressively seek store locations in Eastern Massachusetts, including the City of Boston.

Would you contact the Greater Boston Labor Council prior to Wal-Mart seeking formal approval to locate in Boston?

YES

NO

Would you make it a precondition that Wal-Mart use union labor on the building of stores in your community?

YES

NO

Wal-Mart has said it has turned a corner in support of its workers. Elected officials and community leaders should ask Wal-Mart, as a show of good faith, to sign a pledge that Associates will be allowed to choose freely whether they would like to form a union without intimidation or interference from the company. Wal-Mart management should remain neutral in the process.

Would you make it a precondition that Wal-Mart sign such a pledge?

YES

NO

Comments: Workers must be allowed to freely choose to form a union without intimidation or interference from the company.

Revenue

Municipalities, including Boston, are still recovering from the worst fiscal crisis since the Greater Depression. Cut backs in local aide by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, home foreclosures, and other negative consequences of the fiscal crisis have created revenue shortfalls.

What, if any, proposals do you have to increase revenue so that Boston maintains its local services?

Continue to grow the economy of Boston

Boston Living Wage Ordinance

The Boston Living Wage Ordinance was enacted in 1998 and established a “living wage” of \$8.71 an hour, applied to contracts with a dollar value of \$100,000 and non-profit organizations with 100 employees or more. In October, 2001, the Mayor signed an amended Living Wage Ordinance which triggered coverage of contracts of \$25,000, non-profit service contractors with 25 or more employees, increased the living wage from \$9.11 an hour in July 2002 to \$10.25 and added a change to the indexing

mechanism to provide a higher floor of 116% (rather than 110%) of the federal poverty guidelines. The current living wage is \$13.49 an hour.

Since 2001, however, the City has not issued new regulations reflecting the changes and provided a hardship waiver to Casella Waste Management with the result that recycling workers continue to earn wages below the living wage. The Living Wage Advisory Council, established to promote access to Living Wage jobs for low and moderate income Bostonians and to review and make recommendations about the implementation and enforcement of the Ordinance, has been moribund for years.

If elected, would you SUPPORT new regulations that reflect the 2001 amendments and also tighten up the hardship waiver provisions:

YES NO

If elected, would you SUPPORT the denial of hardship waivers where a company fails to prove the inability to pay the living wage:

YES NO

If elected, would you SUPPORT reconstituting the Living Wage Advisory Council with representation by the Greater Boston Labor Council and affected community-based organizations:

YES NO

If elected, would you SUPPORT otherwise ensuring the effective enforcement of the Living Wage Ordinance for the benefit of low and moderate income Bostonians?

YES NO

Comments: **Yes, but I want to review all cases**

Boston Taxi Drivers

Recently the Boston Globe published a three part investigative report on the Boston Taxi Industry, focusing in large part on the predatory practices in the industry notably the exploitation of the drivers. The United Steel Workers/Boston Taxi Drivers Association, an affiliate of the Greater Boston Labor Council, has called for a civilian commission to oversee Boston's Taxi Industry.

Do you support or oppose the creation of such an independent commission?

Support Oppose

The Mayor of Boston has the authority to change the employee classification of Boston's cab drivers. If elected Mayor would you change the employee classification from independent contractor to employee and recognize the United Steelworkers/Boston Taxi Drivers as the authorized representative for the purposes of collective bargaining rights?

YES

NO

General Questions

Many Boards and Commissions appointed by elected officials directly and indirectly impact the lives of working men and women. Where you have the authority to make appointments will you consult with the Greater Boston Labor Council when making appointments to these Boards and Commissions?

YES

NO

As an elected official will you continue to meet regularly with labor representatives to ensure that working men and women's issues are being addressed adequately?

YES

NO

Have you ever assisted a labor organization to achieve any of its goals?

Yes, I was an organizer for the United Farm Workers. I was a member of IBEW.

Does your campaign accept PAC contributions?

YES

NO

Signature: Bill Walczak

Date: Wednesday, June 19, 2013

Title: Community Leader and Candidate for Mayor of Boston, Bill Walczak