

White River Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO  
Candidate Questionnaire  
Jillian Kinzie, Candidate City Council District 2

1. Do you support the right of working people to unionize and engage in collective bargaining?

YES. I support workers right to choose representation and to engage in collective bargaining.

2. In the above question, do you make a distinction between private and public sector workers?

Although union representation is stronger in the public than the private sector, I support the choice of workers to unionize in both sectors. Unions are an important aspect of our history and our future and the basic tenets that unions support – protecting workers pay and benefits, improving safe working conditions, and ensuring collective bargaining are particularly critical in today's global economy.

3. What are your views on the privatization of jobs that are presently done by government employees?

I am generally not in favor of privatization of government jobs. Although I can see where some efficiencies might be found through private contracts of simple services or technology, this is a slippery slope that can quickly undercut public accountability and place corporate capitalism above human needs. As we've seen in the worst cases, expanded privatization also acts to award stable, lucrative government work to contractors without any accountability to taxpayers.

4. Do you support binding arbitration for public employees?

I probably need to look into the specifics of this topic to render a complete response, but in general, I believe binding arbitration can help management and employees bargain in good faith. I support it with public employees because I understand that it is one way to protect against management frustrating employees free choice by prolonging contract negotiations and suppressing employees' collective bargaining rights through "bad faith" bargaining. However, when arbitration is used in a labor dispute, the arbitrator needs to have the flexibility to reach an equitable solution.

5. Should government have a role in the availability and affordability of day care? If no, why, if yes, what role?

Children and working parents benefit greatly by affordable and quality day care. Yet, quality day care remains unavailable or unaffordable to too many families, particularly the working poor, and there is consistent evidence that day care is in low supply for infants, children with disabilities and health care needs, and for parents with unconventional evening, night or shifting work hours. Government should have a role in daycare - we need to increase governmental and employer subsidies for childcare, establish better community childcare referral services, and support community efforts to establish non-profit childcare during evenings, nights and weekends.

6. Do you support domestic partner benefits for city employees?

Yes, as a progressive, university town we ought to recognize different forms of partnerships. Extending benefits to domestic partners is an important aspect of attracting and retaining the best employees, and are demonstrations of a supportive, welcoming environment and of our commitment to the value of diversity.

7. What do you think should be the city governments role in economic development?

The city must be involved in stimulating, supporting and regulating economic development. However a careful balance must be struck between unrestrained development and overly restrictive policies that thwart development. The city needs to attend to the infrastructure and services that make

the prospects for good economic development possible. I am very much in favor of the city governments role in preserving our community character – what makes it attractive to live and work in Bloomington -- and also helping to incubate the economic development ideas of talented, entrepreneurial citizens.

8. How and when should tax abatements be used?

Incentives and abatements are important in some cases – especially for new technology and developing industries. There is a balance, however, that must be struck between established companies requests for incentives and social/civic responsibilities. Our community thrives through the income from the tax structure – but the weight of responsibility must rest equally upon personal income and corporate profits. Goodwill from the city and appropriate and fair economic incentives are the right thing to do in certain circumstances when balanced against the larger needs of the community. I am in favor of incentives and tax abatements to locally owned businesses where the money stays in the community. I am not in favor of rubber stamping tax abatements and incentives for national retail chains or large corporations that send revenues out of our community and sustain profits through low wages --this does not support local growth and a healthy local economy at all.

9. Are you willing to tie the payment of a living wage, full time work, and employer paid health care as conditions for granting tax incentives to businesses?

I value these three conditions for all workers. However, as I indicated above the granting of tax incentives must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Not all businesses will be able to have all 3 of these important conditions in place at the start. Small, homegrown businesses could be adversely impacted, while large corporations could make these promises and then let them erode, or use legal loopholes to avoid having to provide all three conditions. One thing I would do is ensure that the business has clear goals to work toward these conditions and to require some benchmarking to evaluate their progress.

10. Are you in favor of tax abatement documentation being verified?

Yes, for all the reasons I've indicated in my response to question 8 and 9.

11. Would you support a program for Single payer/Universal Health Care?

Health care in the U.S. is complicated business. I believe in the goal of affordable universal health care, but realize that it's probably not simply about assigning a single payer. A public, private partnership must be realized to provide health care and insurance for more members of our community.

12. Would you support a requirement that contractors meet minimum criteria defining a “responsible contractor” in order to be considered for municipal contracts? Criteria: past performance, proper insurance, safety, etc.

Yes. However, this would again require some judgment calls. A new business with limited past performance, or that may require bonding should not be adversely impacted. Again, too many larger contractors, who simply have massed money and power, can provide evidence of these criteria, but there may be other reasons they are not the best contractors for the job.

Thank you. Jillian Kinzie, Candidate for City Council District 2