



Candidate Name: Kam Buckner

Office Sought: Mayor

Ward: N/A

Campaign Committee Name: Kam for Chicago Mayor

Campaign Website: www.kamformayor.com

Campaign Finance

- 1. Running a political campaign is expensive, and candidates without deep pockets or wealthy connections often can't afford to compete. Would you support a public campaign financing program for Chicago city elections, such as a small donor matching or voucher "Democracy Dollars" program? Would you include the new elected school board and Police District Council in a public financing program?**

Yes, I would support a public campaign financing program and would include the Elected Representative School Board and Police District Council in that program.

- 2. Currently, entities doing (or seeking to do) business with the City are limited to contributing \$1,500 to City officials' campaigns. But the limitation [does not extend to officers](#) or other high-level employees of those entities, who can still contribute thousands to officials making decisions about contracts with their companies. Would you support eliminating this loophole, as [cities like New York](#) have?**

Yes.

- 3. Would you support reducing the City's campaign contribution limit from lobbyists and city vendors from \$1500 to \$750 or another number? Feel free to explain.**



Yes. There are too many special interests groups with outsized influence in our elections, and I am in favor of measures that limit their control over our democratic process.

- 4. Do you support any other campaign finance or other reforms that could make the system more transparent and ethical, and make it easier for people of diverse backgrounds to run for office?**

I support public financing of elections, putting caps on big money, and creating stronger ethics laws to govern our electoral process.

Elections

- 1. Ranked-choice voting (RCV) has been adopted around the country as a way of eliminating low-turnout primaries and making elections more democratic. Do you support the adoption of ranked choice voting (RCV) for Chicago's mayoral elections?**

[Click here for more information about ranked-choice voting.](#)

Yes.

- 2. Do you support the adoption of ranked choice voting (RCV) for aldermanic and other city offices?**

[Click here for more information about ranked-choice voting.](#)

Yes.

- 3. The petition gathering and challenge process can make it hard for some good candidates to make it onto the ballot. Would you support state-level efforts to reform the system and, if so, what would you propose?**

Yes. I believe we need a lower threshold for signatures (to run for Statewide office, candidates only need 5,000 signatures compared to 12,500 for the Mayoral race).



4. Proposals to reform the petition process include allowing [digital on-site signatures](#) (e.g. [HB 4966](#)), [online signatures](#), or instituting a maximum number of signatures per office. What are your thoughts on these ideas?

I am open to all ideas that bolster the democratic process and increase choice.

General

1. Have you had any past experience with good governance and reform efforts? If so, we're eager to hear about it.

Examples of good governance and reform efforts: government transparency and accessibility, ethics, voting and elections, campaign finance.

In Springfield, I have sponsored several pieces of legislation that have driven better government practices. Most recently, I am a sponsor on HB 989 which would allow anyone convicted of a felony or otherwise under sentence in a correctional institution or jail to have his or her right to vote restored and HB 1244 to establish a State-level Voting Rights Act.

2. Would you support an effort to reduce the size of the Chicago City Council? If so, what is your ideal number of wards/alderpeople? If not, please explain.

Shrinking the size of city council would do more harm than good. That's why my administration will lead the way on true City Council reform. I've been the only person in this race who has been vocal about instituting real change through city council reform and instituting a true city charter. A city charter can make it easier for citizen-led ordinances to become law and will establish real rules of order in City Council. It would also protect the city from unilateral decision making from the Mayor.

3. Recent news reports assert that some Chicago City Council committees [rarely meet](#) and may function more as remnants of a [patronage system](#) than as effective governing bodies. In your opinion, should the number of committees be reduced from nineteen? Are there any other reforms to the committee system you would propose?



Similarly, the number of committees is not the problem – the problem is mayoral control. My city council reform effort will allow the City Council to pick their own leadership, who will pick their own committee chairs, which will lead to more effective management of the programs that are most important to our city.

4. Do you believe that Chicago’s mayor and city council must do more to limit “aldermanic prerogative”? Why or why not? If so, what steps do you think should be taken to limit it?

Aldermanic prerogative needs to be reassessed. Alderpeople can and should advocate for the best interests of their ward, but it’s important that the Mayor takes the lead on establishing an overall plan for the city of Chicago, particularly as it relates to housing and zoning requirements.

Part of the reason that aldermanic prerogative can lead to corruption is the lack of structure in the Council itself. In the first 100 days of my administration, I intend to introduce an ordinance on City Council reform. City Council should be operated like a true legislative body so they can effectively represent the communities that elected them. They should have a designated parliamentarian and choose their own leadership and committee chairs.

My administration will also lead the charge to create a true city charter for Chicago. We are the only large city without one. Instituting a charter can make it easier for citizen-led ordinances to become law and will establish real rules of order in City Council. It would also protect the city from unilateral decision making from the Mayor.

Ethics

1. How will you work to ensure city leaders elevate the needs of the public over personal or special interests?

I will make sure that people – community members, organizers, and community leaders – are involved in the decision-making process for our city and especially



their neighborhoods. It's imperative that the Mayor and other city leadership do not have unilateral control over decisions that impact the people that live in our city. Establishing a city charter will help with this, and ensuring that our communities have a seat at the table when their interests and their community is being impacted is crucial.

2. Should candidates for mayor have to disclose their tax returns for the past two years?

Yes.

3. Do you believe the Chicago City Council should become more independent of the mayor? If so, please explain the specific changes you'd like to see.

Yes. I'm committed to reforming City Council as mayor and will propose that Aldermen choose their own leadership. City Council should operate like any other legislative body that picks its own committee chairs.