

# [***'Reality Check': Georgia Restaurateur Cites Laken Riley As Reason To Run For Office***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BKY-2R01-DXXD-7053-00000-00&context=1516831)

The Daily Caller

March 15, 2024 Friday 08:57 PM EST

Copyright 2024 The Daily Caller, Inc. All Rights Reserved

**Section:** ***POLITICS***

**Length:** 404 words

**Byline:** Julianna Frieman, Contributor, [*jbf020103@gmail.com*](mailto:jbf020103@gmail.com)

**Body**

[*Link to Image*](https://cdn01.dailycaller.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/IMG_4610-e1710533104945.jpeg)

A Georgia pizzeria owner decided to run for office after nursing student Laken Riley was murdered near the University of Georgia (UGA) campus in Athens.

Riley was allegedly [*beaten to death*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/02/27/laken-riley-illegal-immigrant-disfigured-body/) by an illegal migrant while she was out jogging in late February. Sidney Anne Waters, the owner of Mama Sid's Pizza in Athens, told hosts on Friday's “Fox and Friends First” that the deceased college student was the reason she decided to run for Athens-Clarke County (ACC) Commission.

“I all of a sudden had a reality check,” Waters told Fox News host Todd Piro. “There are a lot of us in Athens that really didn't know what our government was doing ... The day before ... qualifying ending, I decided I would go in and put my name on the ticket.”

Waters said her community is “concerned” about its policies resembling those found in sanctuary cities and the lack of transparency from the city's government. The [*ACC Commission candidate*](https://athenspoliticsnerd.com/voter-info/candidates/sidney-waters/) blasted Athens Mayor Kelly Girtz, who she said enacted unwanted migrant policies after “personally” petitioning the federal government. [***(RELATED: 'That's A Problem': Retired Border Patrol Chief Says Biden, Harris 'Never' Spoke To Him About Migrant Crisis)***](https://dailycaller.com/2024/03/04/retired-border-patrol-chief-raul-ortiz-says-biden-harris-never-spoke-one-conversation-migrant-crisis/)

“Everybody is quite concerned because we have discovered that our local government is not transparent with us. They have resolutions and agreements going that the public had no idea about,” Waters said. “I don't really know how familiar our commission was with the 2019 resolution that opened up a lot of sanctuary. We're not a sanctuary city, but we have sanctuary policies that somewhat control us.”

“Mayor Girtz just came out and read that policy one evening and signed it,” she continued. “He personally petitioned the U.S. State Department for us to become a refugee resettlement site. Nobody knew about that, so what does all this mean? How many people have we welcomed into our community and who are they?”

Residents [*shouted down*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/02/28/georgia-mayor-shouted-down-laken-riley-press-briefing/) Girtz at a press conference following Riley's death, during which the Athens mayor tried to deny that his city has sanctuary city policies. Girtz also criticized former President [*Donald Trump*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/03/10/trump-meets-family-laken-riley-rome-georgia-rally-state-the-union-biden-border-crisis-illegal-migrant-murder/) at the press conference despite the surge of illegal migrants entering the United States under the Biden administration. There were over 2.4 million migrant encounters in fiscal year 2023 alone, up from roughly 2.3 million in fiscal year 2022 and 1.7 million in fiscal year 2021, [*according*](https://www.cbp.gov/newsroom/stats/southwest-land-border-encounters) to federal data.

**Graphic**

Waters decided to run for office after Laken Riley was murdered. [Screenshot/Rumble/Fox News]

**Load-Date:** March 21, 2024

**End of Document**