

MNSCC Candidate Questionnaire



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Running for MN
House District 8B



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she/her/hers | carolwennerformnhouse.com

Public Safety Issues

Do you feel safe in the communities where you live, work, and play? Why or why not?	Yes
What does the phrase “public safety” mean to you? What builds safety? What detracts from it?	To me, public safety means well maintained and well lit streets. It means law enforcement are available to respond were needed in a reasonable amount of time. Law enforcement is well trained to respond appropriately to the given situation. We all build public safety when we respond appropriately to harassment, bullying or unsafe situations for our neighbors or visitors to our community. Looking away from injustices detracts from safety. Holding on to prejudice and bias detracts from safety. Making

	assumptions and jumping to conclusions can detract from public safety.
What is your understanding of the diversity of opinions around public safety in your district? How do your constituents think about what builds safety and what detracts from it in your district?	Often times I hear that, "if people are not committing crimes they will not be put in a position where they are treated poorly or killed during an arrest". "If they would just obey the rules they won't get the knee on the neck". There are opinions like these and more compassionate opinions on public safety in our community. I think that many in this community are not welcoming to diverse groups because they think it only "brings trouble, or it will burden our budgets". Members of the community who stand with the BLM movement are getting better at letting their voice be heard. When we don't feel safe standing up for others it detracts from building community and safety.
What changes do you think would help prevent violence and other undesirable behavior in your district? How will you go about making those changes?	When my neighbors feel supported and treated fairly they are less likely to be violent or use bad behavior as an outlet. When all voices are heard and have room at the table we are all more likely to live in peace. Cities and towns have an opportunity to make room for everyone at the table by incorporating diversity. I will support meaningful conversations with all at the table to share ideas on how to be more welcoming. As a legislator, I want to lean on groups such as yours to help root out racist policies were they exist.
Police Issues	
What are your thoughts on the general culture of the police departments in your district?	In my community in particular I see a desire for the police department to learn about implicit bias and racism. We have promoted a Chief that is a leader in the area of diversity. We have more work to do in our communities to hire those who value diversity and train around the diversity and race issue. We need to make sure they are connecting to community so everyone feels safe and secure.
* What police reforms, if any, do you think would help your district or the state? Please elaborate.	Stronger body cam rules and admission of evidence sooner rather than later. If an officer is fired in one community the transparency should follow his career. Less protection and involvement of unions when it comes to behavior issues. Diversity training and cultural sensitivity training.
* What changes to police budgets, if any, would help your district or the state? Please elaborate.	So often, police are responding to calls that could be delegated to other services which may help the stigma or trauma of the situation. Rewarding with promotions and raises for peace building in the community.

<p>Are there any bills around policing that you would join or champion? What are they and why?</p>	
<p>Criminal Court Issues</p>	
<p>Do you notice any inequities in the courts in your district? What do you see as the driving force in those inequities? How can we count on you to respond to any inequities?</p>	<p>Young people are being incarcerated at alarming rates across the state. I do not know if we have inequities in my district.</p>
<p>Diving into topics like bail, services for crime survivors, court fines and fees, special prosecutors, and sentencing and probation guidelines can illustrate how public policy has immense and diverse impacts on Minnesotans. Are there any bills around criminal court practices that you would join or champion? What are they and why?</p>	
<p>Incarceration Issues</p>	
<p>In your opinion, what is the purpose of incarceration? Do you believe that incarceration accomplishes those purposes well? If not, why not, and what would you do about it?</p>	<p>While I understand that adults may need incarceration I feel that it is not the answer for youth. When surveyed, 53% of youth experienced one of the 6 variations of trauma in their life compared to 28% of youth surveyed who were not incarcerated.</p>
<p>What do you know about alternatives to incarceration and how they address violence and other undesirable or criminalized behavior? What incarceration alternatives do you support and why?</p>	<p>Jobs programs, access to affordable healthcare and housing would be a good place to start. Supporting families in the early stages of development will show dividends in behavior later in life.</p>
<p>* Every district in Minnesota is home to people who have experienced incarceration. How do you think issues like</p>	<p>These issues have a profound effect on a community. If basic needs are being met during incarceration, the individuals released will be more successful at living a more healthy, peaceful productive life in a community and everyone feels more secure.</p>

access to health care, visits/phone calls/emails, education, and other programming while incarcerated affect your constituents?	
* For purposes of drawing legislative districts, should incarcerated persons be counted as part of the district where they are incarcerated, or should incarcerated persons be counted as part of the district where they had their last residential address? Or something else? Why?	It would depend on the length of incarceration.
Are there any bills around incarceration or probation that you would join or champion? Which ones and why?	I think we need to look at incarceration and probation and make sure that the time fits the crime. Children in the system need to be supported and given what they need to be successful such as stable house, healthcare and education opportunities.

Reentry Issues

* People return from incarceration to every district in Minnesota. How do you think issues like access to housing, employment, health care, recovery resources, mental health supports, basic needs, and voting or civic engagement affect your constituents?	Everyone including those returning from incarceration should have equal access to housing, healthcare, basic needs and voting. Some communities look at this as a burden to their communities. I see this as an opportunity for us to put equality into practice.
What, if any, changes would you make to re-entry policies? And what investments, if any, would you make to re-entry supports in your district? Why?	Education is the key to reform. Remove the barriers to success. Healthcare this is affordable, suitable housing and a good support system.

Public Health Issues

What are your thoughts about how the Department of Corrections has responded to the coronavirus pandemic?	I believe that racism has been brought to the for-front during the pandemic. The pandemic was a wake-up call for the state to look at all inequalities especially in custody and also during incarceration.
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<p>* What, if any, public health crises do you think have inequitable impacts on people who are involved in the criminal legal system, and how can we count on you to respond to these public health crises?</p>	<p>Racism is a public health crises. For too long, people of color have experienced inequality in policing and the criminal justice system. I vow to respond to eliminate racism and injustices in the criminal legal system when I see it and when citizens and public officials bring this to my attention.</p>
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Personal Connections

<p>* Are there any ways in which you feel personally connected to issues in policing, criminal court, incarceration, and/or re-entry? What is personal about these issues for you, and how will that impact your priorities and/or stances?</p>	<p>I believe we are all on this earth for a purpose and we all should be given a second chance when we make mistakes. I believe it is our responsibility to treat everyone with dignity and respect whether it is in the custody process or the incarceration process and it is our responsibility as a community to welcome everyone in for a fresh start. I have been involved in the recovery community for many years and many of my friends have been given the opportunity to start over and are now productive and loving members of our community.</p>
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<p>How can your constituents support you in accomplishing any changes you've outlined here?</p>	<p>Contacting me and others when they see injustices or successes in their communities. Put aside differences and put principals above personalities to help find room for acceptance and love in our communities.</p>
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