

MNSCC Candidate Questionnaire



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Running for MN
Senate District 66



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he/him/his | johnmarty.org

Public Safety Issues

Do you feel safe in the communities where you live, work, and play?
Why or why not?

Yes. Unlike many others in my communities who have an understandably different perspective, as a white male, I don't fear that police or others will attack me because of how I look or who I am.

What does the phrase "public safety" mean to you?
What builds safety? What detracts from it?

Public safety means that members of the public feel safe and are safe from high risks of having their lives or their health threatened. The threats can come from pollution, from lack of resources, or from other people.

Safety is built when we make sure the whole community has the resources and opportunities to have their needs met – with everything from clean air, clean water, safe housing, adequate food and care, protection from dangerous threats, and help in

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| | <p>support to overcome problems and injury.</p> <p>Failure to meet the needs of people for those resources, opportunities, and supports, reduces the public health of a community.</p> |
| <p>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?</p> | <p>People have widely varying opinions of public safety, partly because of what they hear and see – either in the media or in their neighborhood, and partly because of who they are.</p> <p>If people hear gunfire in the neighborhood, or lots of sirens, they are likely to feel unsafe. If they watch TV news focused on crime: “If it bleeds, it leads”, they will feel less safe, even if the news coverage is far away, or heavily distorted. If they hear public figures or the media talking about “dangerous” people – like Trump’s saying of Mexican immigrants “They’re bringing crime. They’re rapists.” – they fear immigrants or people who look different than them.</p> <p>People also have different opinions about public safety based on who they are. A black man who is stopped by police frequently and who has seen so many police killings of black men will feel less safe than a white man who is never stopped by police. A woman who has been harassed or assaulted and who knows others who have will feel less safe than a man who hasn’t been</p> |
| <p>What changes do you think would help prevent violence and other undesirable behavior in your district? How will you go about making those changes?</p> | |
| <p>Police Issues</p> | |
| <p>What are your thoughts on the general culture of the police departments in your district?</p> | |
| <p>* What police reforms, if any, do you think would help your district or the state? Please elaborate.</p> | <p>There are numerous reforms needed, and I have authored legislation on a handful of those reforms: We should ban the militarization of policing, starting with a ban on the military equipment that departments get from the federal government. One Minnesota department got a grenade launcher! I authored a bill that would prohibit acquisition of military weaponry.</p> <p>We need to ban “warrior training” of police. The legislation adopted by the legislature simply prohibited departments for paying for such training. Unfortunately the Mpls Police Federation is still allowed to pay for such training. There was a study from Florida State University officers with more of the “warrior” tendency “revealed greater importance of physical</p> |

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| | <p>control and more favorable attitudes toward excessive use of force” We cannot afford any officers to favor excessive use of force. We need to ban such training and provide rehabilitative training to those who have had such training in the past.</p> |
| <p>* What changes to police budgets, if any, would help your district or the state? Please elaborate.</p> | <p>Police budgets should be based on legitimate need. Putting excessive resources into policing makes every problem into a law enforcement issue, just like the adage, if your only tool is a hammer, every problem looks like a nail. We need to treat addiction and mental illness as health problems, not crimes, yet we have invested so heavily in policing that we have made other problems into criminal matters.</p> <p>As I mention in the previous question, if we have more appropriate professionals responding to each type of situation, we will need fewer police, we will have fewer problems, and we will save money. One such alternative responder program in Eugene Oregon cost \$2 million/year to operate but saves \$8.5 million/year. When communities are able to invest more in addressing community needs, the need for, and cost of, policing goes down.</p> |
| <p>Are there any bills around policing that you would join or champion? What are they and why?</p> | <p>I mention several that I have authored and worked on in the previous questions.</p> |

Criminal Court Issues

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| <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>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> | |

Incarceration Issues

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| <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>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>* Every district in Minnesota is home to people who have experienced incarceration. How do you think issues like access to health care, visits/phone calls/emails, education, and other programming while incarcerated affect your constituents?</p> | <p>We call our system of incarceration a “corrections” system, yet we don’t use it to help correct behavioral issues, we use it to punish. We should make the correctional system live up to its name, helping give people a second chance. This requires using time while incarcerated to help people prepare for their future and to give them a chance to engage in society. That requires providing education and training, it requires allowing contacts with family – to help people feel more engaged and more valued to family and the community. And not only do all people have a right to healthcare, but this is especially important for incarcerated people with high percentages of people suffering from mental illness and/or substance use disorders. Changing our prisons and jails to “correctional” facilities would do much to improve public safety and give people a second chance.</p> |
| <p>* 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?</p> | <p>People should be counted where they had their last residential address, especially since they cannot vote in the community in which they are incarcerated. Otherwise, legislative representation and other resources are tilted away from the communities where the incarcerated people come from, communities that are usually underrepresented in terms of public resources and public attention. Because inmates cannot vote, a handful of districts get more representation per non-incarcerated person than everyone else.</p> |
| <p>Are there any bills around incarceration or probation that you would join or champion? Which ones and why?</p> | |

Reentry Issues

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| <p>* 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?</p> | <p>We need to do far more to invest in the future of people, through affordable housing, living wage jobs, universal healthcare – including mental health and chemical dependency treatment, and meeting basic needs. Allowing people who were incarcerated to vote and participate in civic life is one of the best ways we have of getting people invested and engaged in their community. I am a strong supporter of universal healthcare, moving all people out of poverty and getting everyone engaged in civic life in a community.</p> |
| <p>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?</p> | |
| <p>Public Health Issues</p> | |
| <p>What are your thoughts about how the Department of Corrections has responded to the coronavirus pandemic?</p> | |
| <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>Personal Connections</p> | |
| <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 feel personally connected to these issues because of the injustices that I see, and the belief that we can have a more just, fair, and safer community if we clean up the messed-up system that we have. I have met many people who have been unjustly treated and others who desperately want, and deserve, a second chance.</p> |
| <p>How can your constituents support you in accomplishing any changes you've outlined here?</p> | <p>By helping elect public officials who will listen and care and work to fix this our system that is filled with racism and injustice.</p> |

