

# MNSCC Candidate Questionnaire



**John Thompson  
Running for MN  
House District 67A**



This questionnaire is for educational purposes only. MNSCC does not endorse any specific candidate for the Minnesota House or Senate.

he/him/his | <https://www.johnthompsonfor67a.org>

## Public Safety Issues

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

No. The system is set to disenfranchised people of color. And the systematic racism exist in these institution that are supposed to protect and give safety in the communities.

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

Public safety is about investing in people, not status quo systems like policing that were historically set up to oppress people of color, people in poverty, and more. What builds safety is coming together and calling out on racism that exists and holding people accountable. What detracts from it is that people feed into fear, are not educating themselves and feel that people are color falsely accusing a system that has been working but this system only benefits white people.

<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>My understanding of the diversity of opinions around public safety in my district is that this is not a people-centered budget that will invest back to our people through community programming and improve and maintain top quality public safety. My constituents have been not involve because the district has long been silence. I also understand that my district has been long overdue in being a part of the solution because of low-income families, renters, immigrants and people who have been oppressed by the officials that they feel they have no voice.</p>
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<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>Changes I think would prevent violence and other undesirable behavior in my district would be to invest in the people. I will push to dedicate funding to local community organizations that do the groundwork to eliminate gun violence, empower our youth, and more.</p>
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**Police Issues**

<p>What are your thoughts on the general culture of the police departments in your district?</p>	<p>As a black man, I know from my own lived experiences that the general culture of the police department does protect and serve us. Communities of color, especially our black and brown communities are being targeted every day. In fact, many fear for their lives and it's an everyday battle.</p>
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<p>* What police reforms, if any, do you think would help your district or the state? Please elaborate.</p>	<p>All levels of government needs to address police misconduct and systemic racial bias, as well as police brutality in the United States. We need to hold be police accountable, speak the truth of shared experiences and dedicate real policies that will find a even ground to heal. We need elected officials to call them out and speak truth that this.</p>
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<p>* What changes to police budgets, if any, would help your district or the state? Please elaborate.</p>	<p>In my district, there is a need to hire people of color who is culturally competent and can speak their native language. The district also needs non-uniform people who are training as peace officers throughout the state of Minnesota to deal with people with autism or in a mental health crisis and de-escalation training for situations that could turn volatile.</p>
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<p>Are there any bills around policing that you would join or champion? What are they and why?</p>	<p>On July 21, 2020, the Minnesota state legislature passed major police reform legislation, I would gladly join and champion.</p>
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**Criminal Court Issues**

<p>Do you notice any inequities in the courts in your district?</p>	<p>There has always been inequities in the courts in not only mine but other districts as well. Again this is a systematic racism that arises from these intuitions that are govern and run by white</p>
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<p>What do you see as the driving force in those inequities? How can we count on you to respond to any inequities?</p>	<p>people who profit from the poor and communities of color. You can count me to be a champion for these issues because I am an organizer. I have spent a good portion of my life organizing to reform our criminal justice system by working in coalition to eliminate the deeply punitive systems and practices in our communities.</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>I know that the MN Second Chance Coalition has been working on bills around criminal court practices that I would like to partner with.</p>
<p><b>Incarceration Issues</b></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>In my opinion, I don't believe the purpose of incarceration. Incarceration does not accomplish anything purposeful expect for imprisoning more black people for petty crimes and being lost in the system that could care less about their well-being. For the youth, I have seen and experienced within myself and others that there is a school-to-prison pipeline system that needs to be fade out. The system is killing people who are incarcerated instead of giving them a second chance.</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>I don't have an alternative to incarceration but I am willing to work with other coalitions to find a solution. Let's work on empowering our youths and adults by giving them a proper education, a livable wage and affordable housing to start with.</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>No.</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>I don't have the answer to this question but either way, no human should be accounted for monetary gain.</p>
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<p>Are there any bills around incarceration or probation that you would join or champion? Which ones and why?</p>	
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**Reentry Issues**

<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>As your State Representative, I will lead in restoring voting rights to formerly incarcerated people, banning private prisons, and ensure people directly impacted by our systems have a seat at the table to craft real life solutions.</p>
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<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>	
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**Public Health Issues**

<p>What are your thoughts about how the Department of Corrections has responded to the coronavirus pandemic?</p>	<p>I believe that having access to healthcare is a human right.</p>
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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>You can count on me to do the work and be the voice when it comes to public health crises involving inequitable impacts on people who are involved in the criminal legal system.</p>
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## Personal Connections

\* 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?

The death of Philando shook my world apart. I knew that I could no longer stay silent to continue to accept this norm. This norm that as a black man, even if I obey the laws, I will still get shot and killed by the law enforcement that is supposed to protect me. After this wake up call, I knew that I had to do something about changing the policies that impact us all and that is why I decided to have a public life, and to run to represent my hometown of 67A.

How can your constituents support you in accomplishing any changes you've outlined here?

My constituents can support me in accomplishing any changes that I've outlined here by joining in the fight for justice. They can also volunteer, donate and vote me. I work for them and my doors is always open. Together we can win this.