

MNSCC Candidate Questionnaire



**Margaret Mary
Stokely
Running for MN
House District 65B**



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

Public Safety Issues

Do you feel safe in the communities where you live, work, and play? Why or why not?	No, not safe. Because of the crime.
What does the phrase “public safety” mean to you? What builds safety? What detracts from it?	Public Safety has become a euphemism. Respect builds safety. Disrespect detracts from it.
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	My closest constituents are people above the age of 62. Law enforcement, without abuse, builds safety. But still Law Enforcement needs to be unyielding to those who chose to abuse and break the law. There is no support for coddling criminals.

what detracts from it in your district?	
What changes do you think would help prevent violence and other undesirable behavior in your district? How will you go about making those changes?	Stronger more determined and definitive drug curtailment. Too many crimes committed by addicts are being ignored. The homeless/addict dynamic is destroying our society. There must be boundaries.

Police Issues

What are your thoughts on the general culture of the police departments in your district?	Rarely see any squad cars in my area, West 7th. Police presence in my district is negligible on the surface.
* What police reforms, if any, do you think would help your district or the state? Please elaborate.	I'd like to reform the criminal element. Without people committing criminal acts, we would not need Police. Police aren't perfect, yet we expect them to be. Who else in our society is expected to be perfect? No one. The third leading cause of death in the USA is from "Medical Mistakes". If Police are expected to be perfect, we should pay them commensurate with that expectation.
* What changes to police budgets, if any, would help your district or the state? Please elaborate.	Perhaps the Police should go door to door and get to know the people on their beat like the Japanese do. Not such an adversarial relationship.
Are there any bills around policing that you would join or champion? What are they and why?	Higher pay, much higher pay for the job they do and the stresses they must endure.

Criminal Court Issues

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?	Any inequities will be roundly condemned by me.
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	The point is to reduce crime and to produce members of society who are healthy contributors to their own lives and to their families, and larger communities. Honore de Balzac, the French writer, has a very wry outlook on the 'Criminal Justice System' being dependent on having lots of crime and criminals. I'd like to work toward a society

<p>Minnesotans. Are there any bills around criminal court practices that you would join or champion? What are they and why?</p>	<p>that is not rife with crime as is ours. I'm in the prevention business.</p>
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Incarceration Issues

<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>The type of incarceration is dehumanizing and rarely accomplishes the goal it is charged with. Rapes inside prisons are part and parcel of doing time. This should never be tolerated. Boot Camp type of regiments, work farms, hard work but with a purpose to give the 'inmate' personal dignity and an appetite for such so that they will always strive for that goal.</p>
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<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 must admit I am ignorant of local alternatives. I know of juveniles being sent to Israel to live on the Kibbutz and do very well in a small intentional community where everyone contributes and has an important role and purpose. I support creative alternatives to prison incarceration where the redemption of the individual is the goal.</p>
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<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>I am not aware that any incarcerated person would not have access to health care, so that should not be an issue. Communication with those on the outside is very important, learning is critical, not 'education' but true growth and learning. I have visited a person in a medium security facility, years ago. There is so much corruption in the prisons that it's a miracle if anyone comes out a new man or woman. Prisons are an industry, a very lucrative industry. That incentive should be removed.</p>
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<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>That is an excellent question for the ages. Should be counted as the district where they reside and should have recourse to contact that representative should they need help. I do not support voting rights for those still under sentence.</p>
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<p>Are there any bills around incarceration or probation that</p>	<p>I have heard of people who were sentenced to 10 years probation. This seems horrifically long. Who is getting paid?</p>
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<p>you would join or champion? Which ones and why?</p>	
<p>Reentry Issues</p>	
<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>The returning 'ex-con' should have a stable resource, beginning with their parole/probation officer, who is there to monitor their needs. Work and housing are critical. I know of one man who can't find housing because he is still 'on paper'. Perhaps volunteering and community service would help re-entry. Helping others stay away from crime is another. I am sure the insanity of prison is difficult to shake. Build, don't destroy.</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>I just discovered that a neighbor in my senior building was convicted of raping a child 23 years ago. How does one be a good neighbor and kind, yet that is such a serious crime with serious consequences....personally I think honesty is the most important element in re-entry. If a person is still in denial of their responsibility in committing a crime, they are not going to do well on the outside.</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>Letting people out is not the answer.</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>I'd have to be advised on any inequitable impacts on such people. I personally take responsibility for my own health and encourage others to do the same.</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</p>	<p>Being the daughter of a felon who was on the lam for 45 years, the mother of a son who has been convicted of two felonies, and by the grace of God I have no record, I've a brother and nephew who are attorneys, the latter a Public Defender who advocates for more Public Defender resources. None of us are perfect and all fall short of the Glory of God. We should be tolerant and understanding of</p>

impact your priorities and/or stances?	those who have been caught and not think of ourselves as 'better than', yet I have little tolerance for those who live a life of crime and feel entitled to do so.
How can your constituents support you in accomplishing any changes you've outlined here?	Be Nice.