

MNSCC Candidate Questionnaire



Perry Nouis
Running for MN
House District 44A



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Public Safety Issues

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

We feel safe in Plymouth at this time. I'm running for State Representative to keep it that way.

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

To me "public safety" means residents of a community living without fear of being attacked, robbed, intimidated, or hindered in their movement in a community. It also means giving people a sense of security in their homes and if a need arises when citizens require emergency assistance they are able to get it promptly and professionally. What builds safety? Mutual respect between elected leaders, law enforcement, and community residents. Each must respect the other. What detracts from it?

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| | When one of the entities just mentioned doesn't respect the others. |
| 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? | I believe we have considerable consensus in Plymouth that law enforcement in our community needs to be defended, not defunded. I also believe that most in our community were appalled at the lawlessness that occurred in south Minneapolis at the end of May. The unchallenged rioting and looting for three nights led to similar lawlessness throughout the country. Enforcing laws and not turning a blind eye to them is what builds 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? | Violence will be prevented when people intent on destroying property and causing mayhem don't do that. We have been fortunate in Plymouth that violence has been avoided. I, we, want to keep it that way. |

Police Issues

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| What are your thoughts on the general culture of the police departments in your district? | The vast, vast majority of police officers are great people doing a very hard and often dangerous job. They don't get enough appreciation for the jobs that they do. They need more support, not less. Fortunately, the overwhelming majority of interactions with the police are handled professionally with respect both ways. |
| * What police reforms, if any, do you think would help your district or the state? Please elaborate. | The police in Plymouth do a great job. We thank them for it. |
| * What changes to police budgets, if any, would help your district or the state? Please elaborate. | With our state and local communities facing massive budget deficits going forward, budgets for police departments are likely to not increase. I would prioritize law enforcement as an essential public service. |
| Are there any bills around policing that you would join or champion? What are they and why? | Unknown at this time. |

Criminal Court Issues

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| Do you notice any inequities in the courts in your district? What do you see as the driving force in those inequities? How | I have a strong sense of fairness. If I see inequities I challenge them. |
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| <p>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.</p> <p>Are there any bills around criminal court practices that you would join or champion? What are they and why?</p> | <p>I need to learn more about "criminal court practices" in order to give you my opinion about them.</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>What's the purpose of incarceration? The combination of punishment and rehabilitation. Criminal behavior must have consequences, but where there's a chance for an individual to get their lives back on the right track that opportunity should exist.</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>As the Administrator of Nouis Home Care in Little Falls for many years I have firsthand experience dealing with individuals who had extensive interactions with law enforcement. What I witnessed was most of the people who were constantly arrested were dealing with mental health issues. They had diagnosis of being bi-polar, depression, suicidal, schizophrenia, ADHD. The lack of mental health facilities and services in the state meant many of them ended up in jail when they acted out. That was no place for them. Jail is really no place for someone with mental problems. Unfortunately, the state closed down several state hospitals many years ago and the treatment options for those suffering from mental illness are either limited or nonexistent. The situation is tragic. It's one of the primary issues I plan to work on as a State Representative.</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</p> | <p>I have to say I'm not very familiar what services are offered to those who are incarcerated.</p> |

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| 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? | I believe they should vote where they reside, or what is considered their legal residence. |
| Are there any bills around incarceration or probation that you would join or champion? Which ones and why? | Unknown at this time. |
| 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? | I believe strongly in second chances. As the Administrator at Nous Home Care we gave many, many previously incarcerated people the opportunity to live with us and we supported them. In fact, I picked up many them at the jail and brought them straight to our Assisted Living facility in Little Falls. We helped them find employment and most of the time we were successful. I also helped them complete applications for social services that they were entitled to receive. Not all facilities like ours were willing to take in those who were being released from jail and that is very unfortunate. |
| 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? | Unknown at this time. |
| Public Health Issues | |
| What are your thoughts about how the Department of Corrections has responded to the coronavirus pandemic? | It seems to me jail/prison is mandatory social distancing. I would think it would be fairly straight forward in implementing CDC guidelines in preventing the spread of coronavirus. |
| * What, if any, public health crises do you think have inequitable impacts on people who are involved in the criminal | As I stated earlier, mental health issues and the lack of services to deal with them is the primary challenge that needs to be dealt with. I'm committed to dealing with them. |

legal system, and how can we count on you to respond to these public health crises?

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?

I was the Administrator of Nouis Home Care in Little Falls for nine years. I saw firsthand the many challenges that people deal with everyday - health problems, physical disabilities, chemical dependency, and the broad spectrum of mental health issues that exist. I dealt with them all. I have deeply held compassion for people who are having a difficult time with life. The one thing that I told every resident that came into our home was that we were there to help them. I also told them that our help started with them. They had to show a willingness to help themselves. I told them if you show us that you are willing to help yourself we're here to help you. We had many, many success stories. More people than not were willing to do that. And many were not. The job was both rewarding and heartbreaking. I left the business (my brothers took it over in 2013) when I was facing my own health issues from the constant stress involved in trying to help our residents. This is a personal issue for me.

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

Checkout my website at perrynouisformn.com.