

MNSCC Candidate Questionnaire



Ralph Kaehler
Running for MN
Senate District 21

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

he/him/his | KaehlerforMNSenate.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?	Feeling and being safe in public
What is your understanding of the diversity of opinions around public safety in your district?	In our rural area, most feel safe. There is prejudice and some division of political thoughts, but for the most part most people treat each other well.

How do your constituents think about what builds safety and 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?	Accountability and responsibility by all people for their actions. Law enforcement using force as a last result and having more training/assistance from mental health professionals will help.

Police Issues

What are your thoughts on the general culture of the police departments in your district?	In our district the law enforcement officers are a part of the community and follow the mission to "protect and serve". They seem to be cognizant of the need to be more equitable in their approach to overseeing minorities.
* What police reforms, if any, do you think would help your district or the state? Please elaborate.	Accountability and responsibility by all people for their actions. Law enforcement using force as a last result and having more training/assistance from mental health professionals will help.
* What changes to police budgets, if any, would help your district or the state? Please elaborate.	I do not have enough information to make a good suggestion at this point.
Are there any bills around policing that you would join or champion? What are they and why?	Some work has already been passed. I do not have specific information of bills at this time.

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?	I believe that the judges do try to be fair and impartial. We need to have faith in our system, but still hold them accountable. In our area of SEMN, the issue of inequity has not been as prevalent as in the metro areas
Diving into topics like bail, services for crime survivors, court fines and fees, special prosecutors, and sentencing and	Reassessing how the bail system works and treat of mental health and minor offenses would be initial areas of review for me. In SD21, this area has not been a high area of inquiry

<p>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>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>It is meant to be a place of control for flight risks while waiting court review and a method of punishment for breaking the law and was originally intended to be a place for reflection and reassessment by the incarcerated.</p> <p>In some cases yes, many times no.</p> <p>It the success/re-incarceration is a reflection of both the person incarcerated and the system. Both sides need to be held accountable for the actions.</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 have read and heard about some alternatives but am not an expert and do not have a comprehensive understanding of the possibilities and limitations of the alternatives.</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>The more support and positive interaction a person has in and prior to incarceration the better.... and the lower the chances are to be incarcerated.</p>
---	--

<p>* For purposes of drawing legislative districts, should incarcerated persons be counted as part of the district where they are incarcerated, or should</p>	<p>On initial blush, I would say they should be counted where they are housed/living at the time of counting, to reduce the likelihood of being double counted or missed.</p>
---	---

<p>incarcerated persons be counted as part of the district where they had their last residential address? Or something else? Why?</p>	
<p>Are there any bills around incarceration or probation that you would join or champion? Which ones and why?</p>	<p>I am not involved with any at this point in time.</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>Having the basic support of the items above is important for those who have never been incarcerated along with those who are released.</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>Need more information on the current process to give a good answer. I do not have a good enough understanding of the current situation.</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>It is a difficult situation. The system was not built to handle this issue.</p> <p>It is a high density controlled environment population.</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>Lacking a home, income or safety for your family will result in people doing what they have to do to protect themselves and their families -- we need to figure out how to improve services for this group.</p> <p>We also have to acknowledge that there is a segment of people who will take advantage of others, and not respect basic principles of law and decency -- this group needs to be held accountable and not be allowed to shift responsibility for their actions upon the rest of the population.</p>

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>How can your constituents support you in accomplishing any changes you've outlined here?</p>	<p>Being involved and providing complete solutions which identify both a pros and cons of each suggestion.</p> <p>Become a trusted source of information for the topics/issues important to you -- without becoming a "one issue at all costs without regard to other impacts advocate"</p>