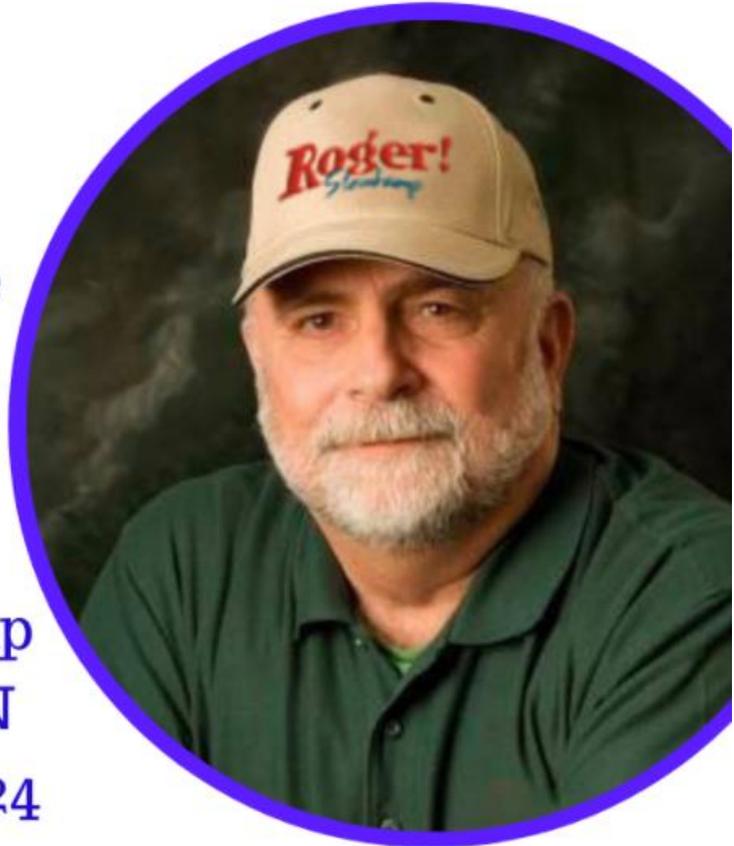


MNSCC Candidate Questionnaire



Roger Steinkamp
Running for MN
Senate District 24



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Public Safety Issues

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

Yes. We have a diverse neighborhood and get along well.

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

Public safety means NOT living in fear of home invasion and ability to walk the neighborhood in peace.

Neighborhood control, meaning real decision making power, in how the peace is maintained in the neighborhood is the key factor. Having some else making key decisions without giving veto power to the community leads to unrest and fear.

<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>We at least pay lip service to inclusion. I believe there is a difference of opinion between indigenous, migrant and immigrant communities and the traditional immigrant community that came a century ago.</p> <p>There's an element that would like to keep the community white. We need to open up and be more inclusive. The district depends on migrant workers and we need treat everyone with respect and be fair.</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>We need to consider what makes people of color concerned for their safety and treat everyone fairly.</p> <p>Prejudice is based on propaganda. That is difficult to counter since it is a belief based value rather fact based.</p> <p>Having the moral courage to stand up to belligerent talk and behavior is a start, but reviving decency is at least</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>Police are asked to do everything from surveilling people's yards for to apprehending dangerous criminals. Their role should be clearly defined as policing for safety, and the community should have decision making power in defining what that means.</p> <p>We are not a police state. We can look to other countries where police are unarmed and walk the beat. That goes a long way to knowing the community. Police that are armed as the military will behave like the military. We can have special units for express deadly situations. Isolating the police in cars doesn't help in community relations. The community will keep you safe if they are involved.</p> <p>Finally, if the police unions truly represent the good police officers, why are officials elected to the union that protect bad officers at all costs. If the good officers are in the majority, please elect good officials that will not harbor the bad guys in the force. This is not unique to the police unions. We just need to do the right thing.</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>I believe our district has good will. Finding mechanisms to be more inclusive of citizens from all the community groups would be helpful. Then give them real decision making power.</p>
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<p>* What changes to police budgets, if any, would help your</p>	<p>I'm not familiar with the budgets of the individual police and sheriff departments at this point and would want them reviewed with the community.</p>
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<p>district or the state? Please elaborate.</p>	
<p>Are there any bills around policing that you would join or champion? What are they and why?</p>	<p>As a general principle, I would favor retraining of officers in de-escalation techniques, community policing and getting them back on the street.</p> <p>I would oppose arming police departments as a military contingent. The old adage... when all you have is a hammer, everything else looks like a nail.</p>

Criminal Court Issues

<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>To be honest, I would need to study this more closely.</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 champion bills that reform the system. Why do we incarcerate people at one of the highest rates in the world? We have a system that blames victims and profiles people. It will take a long list of specific reforms at many levels to address this.</p>

Incarceration Issues

<p>In your opinion, what is the purpose of incarceration? Do you believe that incarceration accomplishes those purposes well?</p> <p>If not, why not, and what would you do about it?</p>	<p>Incarceration does not accomplish the alleged purpose of rehabilitation. Most importantly it is not administered fairly. People who have demonstrably violated the law get off if they have a good lawyer. The poor get years in prison for minor offenses.</p> <p>Several European countries with low incarceration rates have demonstrated that locking people up is not the solution. High incarceration rates are the hallmark of authoritarianism.</p> <p>We need to eliminate contracts with private companies. Companies by nature are amoral with no ethical guidelines other than to turn a profit. If we lock people up we take care of them transparently.</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>We should take a close look at the Nordic incarceration program. Incarceration is viewed as a last resort only for those who must be removed from society. The focus is on rehabilitation, not punishment.</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>I would like to hear more from them.</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 would welcome to hear the arguments.</p>
<p>Are there any bills around incarceration or probation that you would join or champion? Which ones and why?</p>	<p>I would seriously consider ending private prisons. Private companies are not well suited to deal with social issues.</p>

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>If the goal is integrate people into society, then investments should be made to provide the help needed to accomplish that. That could mean education, counseling, coaching etc.</p> <p>More importantly is address the environment that lead a person to commit a crime.</p> <p>By focusing only short term remedies and then abandoning people to their fate promotes the cycle.</p>
<p>What, if any, changes would you make to re-entry policies? And what investments, if any,</p>	<p>I don't have a deep enough understanding of the people involved to make a judgement. I would like to listen to their advice and act accordingly.</p>

<p>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>Apparently, non-violent offenders were released. It took a pandemic to point out they should not have been incarcerated in the first place. I would like to see a long term plan to change the system.</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>You evidently have devoted much more time to understanding this issue. I understand that in people are not treated fairly. So, can I count on your counsel? I will act accordingly.</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 have had neighbors who were outside the law and have seen the consequences of lawless behavior by police. More importantly, I have lived in societies that do not embrace punishment and pursue rehabilitation much better than we do. So, let's learn the lesson and change.</p>
<p>How can your constituents support you in accomplishing any changes you've outlined here?</p>	<p>We're not exceptional so we can learn and change our system. It will take everyone to do their part. I can't change your world for you. I can only do my part. So let's get going. My hand is extended.</p>