

# MNSCC Candidate Questionnaire



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**Running for MN**  
**House District 41B**

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

she/her/hers | [www.feistforhouse.org](http://www.feistforhouse.org)

## Public Safety Issues

Do you feel safe in the communities where you live, work, and play? Why or why not?	
What does the phrase “public safety” mean to you? What builds safety? What detracts from it?	
What is your understanding of the diversity of opinions around public safety in your district?	

<p>How do your constituents think about what builds safety and what detracts from it in your district?</p>	
<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><b>Police Issues</b></p>	
<p>What are your thoughts on the general culture of the police departments in your district?</p>	
<p>* What police reforms, if any, do you think would help your district or the state? Please elaborate.</p>	<p>I am a strong supporter of statewide police reforms. While the recent Minnesota Police Accountability Act was a step in the right direction, we have a long way to go in addressing meaningful racial justice and police reform in our state. In particular, I support legislation for independent investigation and prosecution of police violence, enhancing the power of civilian review boards, reimagining police licensing and oversight through the POST Board, and allowing residency requirements for officers.</p>
<p>* What changes to police budgets, if any, would help your district or the state? Please elaborate.</p>	<p>Police budgets make up an oversized percentage of most city budgets and it is time to reexamine our current public safety model. While the police provide important public safety services, including violent crime response and prevention, police officers are not always the most ideally equipped to address mental health crises and other non-violent disputes or minor infractions. Accordingly, I support a reimagining of the role of the police in our state and a deep analysis of where we might be able to reallocate resources that better serves an expansive view of public safety and community investment, such as alternative crisis response models.</p>
<p>Are there any bills around policing that you would join or champion? What are they and why?</p>	
<p><b>Criminal Court Issues</b></p>	
<p>Do you notice any inequities in the courts in your district? What do you see as the driving</p>	

<p>force in those inequities? How 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 would support many of the criminal legal reform issues that community organizations and advocates have prioritized in recent sessions. For example, I support significant reforms to Minnesota’s cash bail system because people who are arrested, but not yet convicted, should not remain in jail simply because they cannot afford to pay money bail. I also support reducing or eliminating fines and fees from traffic and other low-level offenses that effectively criminalize poverty. Finally, the legislature can do more to limit probation terms to the time needed to achieve rehabilitation, accountability, and public safety.</p>

**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>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>* 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>Access to quality health care, visits, phone calls, emails, educational services, and other programming to individuals while incarcerated is essential to effective rehabilitation and eventual reentry into the community. Access to visits and other contacts with family and community members benefits not only the incarcerated individual, but those who are struggling with the incarceration of their loved ones. Allowing access to health care and education while incarcerated leads to better results when the person reenters the community.</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>For purposes of drawing legislative districts, incarcerated persons should be counted as part of the district where they had their last residential address. Because prisoners cannot vote, artificially increasing the population of communities near prisons dilutes the apportionment of political power away from</p>

<p>incarcerated persons be counted as part of the district where they had their last residential address? Or something else? Why?</p>	<p>prisoners' home districts. While a person's last residential address may not be a perfect proxy for their home, it is a solid indicator of where they are likely to live after they are released, and their interests will likely be better represented by their community than by residents of the district where they happen to be detained.</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>Access to housing, employment, health care, recovery resources, mental health supports, and other basic needs are important to all members of community, especially those who have been impacted by the criminal legal system and now face the myriad collateral consequences of a conviction. In order for both the individual and our communities to thrive upon reentry, we need to provide additional access to these basic services and increase funding for them.</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>	
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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>Due to the pervasive racial disparities in policing, prosecution, and incarceration, any public health crisis in Minnesota is likely to have inequitable impacts on BIPOC (Black indigenous, and people of color) Minnesotans who are involved in the criminal legal system. We know, for example, that the coronavirus pandemic has had a devastating and disparate impact on BIPOC communities in our state. Since incarcerated individuals are at a heightened risk of community spread, I support programs to safely and temporarily release individuals with preexisting conditions because a prison sentence should not be a death sentence.</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?

While I have not been personally impacted by issues in policing, criminal court, incarceration, or re-entry, I feel personally connected to these issues through my experience as a Board member with the ACLU of Minnesota, which advocates for criminal legal reform, and as an immigration attorney, since experiences with policing and the criminal legal system can have a profound impact on a person's immigration status and ability to become a naturalized citizen of the United States. As an attorney and advocate, these issues are priorities for me as I work for a Minnesota where everyone has opportunities and all are welcome.

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