

Candidate Questionnaire on Housing Issues

2022



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City/Town: Woodbury

Legislative District: HD47A

Party: DFL

Candidate responses in italics.

1. In July 2021, a [national poll](#) found that 68% of the public believes that elected officials are not paying enough attention to the rising cost of housing and ensuring everyone can afford a place to live. **What do you believe is the role of government in ensuring everyone has a place to call home?**

Housing is a human right, and the government has a role in ensuring that people have their basic needs met. The government has a role in enacting policies to ensure living wages for workers, protecting renters/homeowners, and supporting more affordable healthcare so that people don't have to worry about whether they have a home.

2. Nearly all counties in Minnesota (92%) are not able to provide sufficient shelter or temporary housing to those who are homeless. **What will you do to end homelessness?**

There is a lack of affordable and rental housing across the state. One priority is addressing the long waiting list for subsidized housing. Another priority is addressing the widening gap between income and homeownership/rental costs. Finally, promoting local and statewide assistance programs can help homeowners buy their first house or make necessary repairs to their house.

3. Emergency rental assistance keeps people stably housed, as we saw with federal pandemic-related funding. Historically, nonpayment of rent is the most common reason landlords evict their tenants. During times of financial crisis, families without access to financial resources may be displaced, evicted, or even become homeless. **What will you do to prevent evictions?**

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4. Minnesota's housing crisis disproportionately harms families of color, especially Black and Indigenous households. Minnesota is one of the worst states in the nation for racial disparities in homeownership. Additionally, 58 percent of Black renters are paying more than they can afford on housing costs. **What meaningful steps will you take to eliminate racial disparities in housing?**

It is clear there are systemic barriers to families of color owning their own homes. Policies like down-payment assistance and low interest rate loans targeted to communities of color can help address this issue. It is also important to intentionally engage with communities, listening to understand, and creating solutions together to best address the needs and outcomes of communities.

5. There are approximately 170,000 renter households in the state that earn less than \$31,200 per year. But rental assistance is only available to one out of every four income-qualifying households. Even though more than 100,000 lowest income households need homes, the state only supports the production of 100 homes each year for these families. **What will you do to support the housing needs of those at the lowest income level in Minnesota?**

It is important to examine multiple factors that contribute housing instability. One option to address the housing needs is adjusting the threshold for rental assistance so that more people with low income are eligible. Another option is continued assistance with student loan debt, as we have already seen success with the recent federal loan assistance. With the recent budget surplus, we can look at ways to better support affordable housing, including increasing the amount of income-qualifying housing.

6. Energy efficiency improvements in multifamily buildings and weatherizing single family homes improve indoor air quality, eliminate drafts, and protect residents from extreme cold and heat—delivering health benefits and lower health care costs. **What strategies do you support to improve housing conditions and reduce utility costs?**

As homes age and can become less energy efficient, it is important that we invest in weatherizing homes and investing in renewable energy sources to combat increasing costs of heating and electricity. As technology advances and more people adopt clean energy alternatives, the more attainable cleaner energy will become. Solar and wind energy have shown to be a great starting point for communities. Bolstering our electrical and heating infrastructure is needed for sustainable adoption of clean energy into the future. Net metering allows the technology to be affordable and accessible for family and multi-family building owners. Finally, we must continue to support programs to encourage and incentivize renters, homeowners, and businesses to adopt clean energy.

7. Minnesota's home values are increasing rapidly, constraining low- and middle-income families from achieving affordable homeownership, including more than 64,000 households of color. **What steps will you take to increase opportunities for renters to purchase homes, condos, or cooperative ownership models?**

Policy initiatives like down-payment assistance, financing opportunities, increased access to affordable healthcare, increased availability of affordable child care, and student loan debt assistance would all contribute to increased opportunities for homeownership.

8. Including the recommendations of the community when developing policies and programs is a best practice for effective and lasting solutions. **How will you include those most impacted by housing needs in developing and implementing housing solutions?**

Creating the best solutions comes from intentionally engaging with the community, listening to their lived experiences, and developing outcomes in partnership. I will seek out opportunities to work with community based organizations, housing advocates, and people most impacted.