

Candidate Questionnaire on Housing Issues

2022



Erin Maye Quade

City/Town: Apple Valley

Legislative District: SD56

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?**

The state government's primary role in ensuring housing for all is full funding for housing and homelessness reduction. One of the key roles of the state is to ensure everyone's ability to access basic resources and live, and housing is included among these. I support the Homes for All agenda and expanding our view of and investment in public housing.

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?**

Similar to question one, I believe we need a historic investment in housing. This should include funding nonprofits who are seeking to build more housing and operate shelters for those between housing, expanding rental assistance programs at the state level, creating more high quality public housing that anyone who needs can access, and investing in resources to keep people in housing once they access it (mental health supports, career counseling, and more). As we sit on a surplus of over 9 billion dollars, we can make a clear choice to house every single person in Minnesota, if we have the political will to do so.

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?**

The state can and should expand rental assistance to ensure anyone who is struggling can receive help in making payments. I would support legislation that provides emergency funding for families in crisis and sustained funding for those below the poverty line, especially for single parents or other families with higher needs for support.

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?**

I support implementing rent control, or at the very least passing permissive language that guarantees county and city authority to do so. I also support an expansion of public housing to ensure reduced costs for those who need it. We also need legislation that creates targeted investment in BIPOC home ownership. While Minnesota has great first-time home buyer programs, we need to make sure everyone is aware of them, and we need to create more opportunities like these specifically for Minnesotans of color who don't have the same type of financial resources that many white Minnesotans do. We also need to take a serious look at several of our government practices that reduce property values in predominantly BIPOC neighborhoods. We place polluting industries, highways, and other projects in these neighborhoods, leading to reduced property value and health outcomes. We need a culturally responsive process to ensure projects are not placed in or near neighborhoods only because they have less money and political power.

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?**

This is similar to my previous answers, but we need to invest deeply in affordable and public housing. The state should guarantee that every Minnesotan has a room over their head, and we have the money to do so. We can do this through directly creating public housing, investing in organizations who are doing this work, and investing in programs that help low-income Minnesotans own their own homes.

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?**

We have had success in mandating energy companies like Xcel spend on weatherization improvement projects, our state Weatherization Assistance Program to fund individual weatherization projects. I would support increasing funding for this program, and the expansion of programs like the Energy Assistance Program.

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?**

We need to expand access to, eligibility for, and funding of our home buyer loan programs. This can create access to homeownership that many families previously didn't have, and to do so in ways that avoid predatory loans. We also need to raise our minimum wage significantly so people have the ability to save money and create enough wealth to purchase a home.

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?**

I am an advocate for always leading in coalition with those we are serving. I intend to invite leaders from organizations working on housing into conversations I have about these policies, and solicit input from those in my district (and across the state) who are most impacted by these policies. This can be done through intentional outreach via email, using social media as a tool to connect with others, hear their stories, and invite them in, and through using my relationships to ensure I have perspective from key policy leaders.